Biblical and
Oriental Series

THE RECOVERY OF FORGOTTEN EMPIRES

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SAMUEL A. B. MERCER, General Editor

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THE RECOVERY OF FORGOTTEN EMPIRES

By

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TO

MY THURSDAY AFTERNOON CLASS IN TORONTO

THIS LITTLE BOOK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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Ernest de Sarsec
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Fig. 1

PREFACE

The first step in the Recovery of Forgotten Empires is the work of Excavation. Since the Great War a new era in archaeological excavation has dawned. Now that Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Egypt are either mandates of enlightened Western powers, or are under their influence and guidance, we may hope for unimpeded opportunity for research. There is no limit to the possibilities of important discoveries which may be forthcoming in Palestine, Babylonia, and Egypt.

Already there are combined English and American expeditions working in Egypt and Mesopotamia, and English, American, French, and German archaeologists are working and planning for greater work in Palestine, while the land of the Hittites holds out many promises.

Just at this point it is interesting to review what archaeologists, linguists, and historians have done in the way of recovery of the empires of the ancient Orient. That is the object of this little book.

During the past two years, the author has lectured far and wide in the United States and in Canada. The lecture which seemed to draw forth

most interest and which was repeatedly asked for, was one entitled The Recovery of Forgotten Empires. The author was so frequently asked if it was in print that he has ventured so to render it, in order that those who kindly desired to read it may do so, and that it may be accessible to a wider circle of admirers of the ancient Orient.

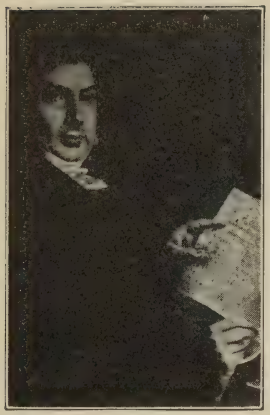
The purpose of the book is, first of all, to show how the past has been gradually recovered; and then to indicate how very much we modern people are the heirs of antiquity; and finally to emphasize the fact that just as astronomy teaches us the unity of God's marvellous universe, so archaeology shows us that the human race is one great family and we are all brothers and sisters, children of our Heavenly Father.

The author will feel amply rewarded if he has succeeded in making these points clear, and if, as a result, he will be instrumental in increasing and arousing new interest in and enthusiasm for the further work which still lies before us in completing the recovery of forgotten empires.

My thanks are due to my friend, Professor J. A. Maynard, for reading this book in proof.

Samuel A. B. Mercer.

Trinity College
Toronto, Canada.
March 1925.



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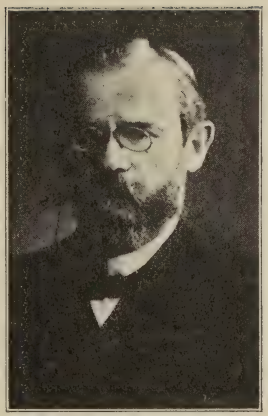
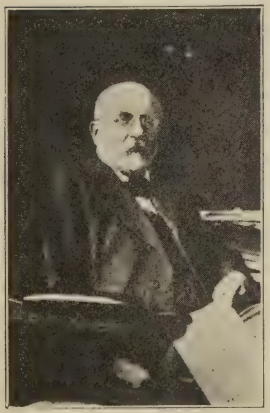


HUGO WINCKLER



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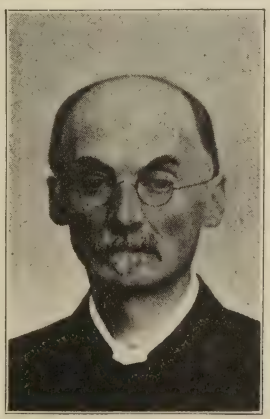


REV. A. H. SAYCE

Fig. 2—EXPLORERS AND DECIPHERERS

I. INTRODUCTION

The age in which we live has been given various names. It has been called the Iron Age, the Age of Science, the Automobile Age, the Age of Research. It is also an Age of Recovery, and recovery is Archaeology. For just as prophets have taught us to turn our eyes towards the future, so archaeologists have of late been teaching us that in order to know the present and prepare for the future we must study the past.

In some respects archaeology is a new science. It is certainly an old discipline. The last king of ancient Babylonia was an ardent archaeologist. Indeed, if Nabonidus had not been so well wedded to this avocation, Cyrus might have found it more difficult to conquer Babylon. It was Nabonidus who, in his excavations in connection with the restoration of the temple of Marduk in Babylon, discovered the foundation deposit of an ancient king, Naram-Sin. He calculated that it was 3,200 years between the time of Naram-Sin and the year in which he made his discovery. He was archaeologist enough to cause this calculation to be inscribed on a clay cylinder which is now in the British Museum. He is thus the Father of Archaeology.

Herodotus has been called the "Father of History," but much of his work was that of an archaeologist. The same may be said of Manetho and of many others throughout the centuries, such as Josephus, Eusebius, Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta, Odoricus, Niebuhr, who interested themselves travelling, collecting, and writing, in order to make the past live anew.

With Schliemann, Botta, Rawlinson, Layard, Lepsius, and Mariette a new era of archaeology dawned, until now archaeology takes its place among the sciences. In preparing today for archaeological exploration quite as much careful and scientific precaution is taken as astronomers and geologists take in preparing for important astronomical observation and geological research. A well equipped archaeological party must include in its number not only experienced archaeological field workers but also an engineer, a photographer, a draughtsman, a linguist, a historian, and if possible, a chemist and an architect. The task is to take note of everything no matter how insignificant, for everything will find its place in the reconstructed picture of the past which it is the duty of the party, so far as possible, to present.

Nor is the work of the archaeologist tedious, dry, or uninteresting. There is a romance about it that is thrilling, for it partakes of the fascination of exploration, the charm of travel, the thrill of discovery, and the mystery of detection.

The archaeologist must be a man of imagination and vision. He must have an imagination capable of arranging the details of the political, religious, social, and domestic life of ancient peoples, and a vision capable of seeing a panorama of the life and thought of ancient peoples and civilizations. The world is interesting because of the men and women who live in it, and the past is interesting because of what men and women have loved and done. And the life we live and of which we are a part, this multitudinous complexity of things, is eloquent of bygone days and is what it is because of its heritage from the mighty past. There is no nobler subject with which the mind of man can interest itself than a contemplation of the course of events which lead back into the deepest ages of the past. The recovery of forgotten empires, then, is a task which, while unproductive commercially, is one of the noblest that can occupy the time and attention of man. It is not creative in the sense that poetry is, nor is it constructive as is the study of science, but it appeals to and makes use of man's highest faculties, and it often furnishes the material without which poetry and science could accomplish but little. The recoverers of forgotten empires bring us face to face with ancient poets, astronomers, merchants and lawyers, artists and engineers, and make them and their work live and move again before our eyes.

During the past century archaeology has been

recovering many empires forgotten, some of them, for thousands of years. The ancient Minoans, the Hittites, the Etruscans, the Amurru, the Incas, and Mayas are all the object of archaeological exploration. It would take many books to tell about the various activities of modern archaeologists. This little book must have its limitations. It will be confined to a brief sketch of the way in which the mightiest empires of the ancient world have been recovered—Sumeria, Babylonia, Assyria, and Egypt. The work has been long and tedious, but it has had a romance all its own. To see again the mighty temples and dazzling palaces of Egypt and Assyria and to read again the histories, stories, poems, and hymns of the sages of the ancient Oriental world would, in itself, repay untold time and energy in the work of recovery. The long procession of thinkers and artists of Babylonia and Egypt stretching back into the fourth millenium before the beginning of our era, six thousand years ago, is the recovery achieved by modern archaeologists. These ancient peoples, as well as the life and civilization of their times, have been made to live again, and a contemplation of them is fascinating and thrilling.

II. EXCAVATIONS AND THEIR ROMANCE

Interest in the ancient past and its recovery was first aroused by travellers. From the time of the wandering friar, Odoricus, 1320, until that of Karstens Niebuhr, 1765, the Arabian traveller, many sightseers in the East had returned to Europe with stories of ruined temples, rock inscriptions, and buried cities which were of sufficient romance to kindle the imagination of the most phlegmatic. The magic names of Baghdad, Babylon, Nineveh, and Thebes, together with the travellers' experiences, were thrilling.

Some of the most industrious of such travellers would often make sketches of the strange things they had seen and would copy bits of drawings or strange scripts that were often observed on walls and monuments. These sketches sometimes fell into the hands of linguists and philologists. Thus, for example, the German philologist Tychsen, 1798, using copies of inscriptions drawn by Niebuhr, made the first real step towards the decipherment of the scripts of ancient Sumeria, Babylonia, Assyria, and Persia, which is now known as cuneiform (wedge-form

writing). He discovered the mark which separates words in cuneiform as well as the equivalent of the vowel "a" and of the consonant "b". It was likewise the linguist Champollion of France who, in 1822, on the basis of copies of the ancient Egyptian script, did much towards establishing the key to the Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Rawlinson of England, 1810-1895, is perhaps the best example of one who, as traveller and linguist, inspired deep interest in Oriental matters and also made an incomparable contribution towards the interpretation of the ancient cuneiform.

The first great step, however, in the recovery of forgotten empires is the work of excavation, that is, the laying bare of cities, temples, palaces and walls bearing inscriptions and sculptured, carved, and painted scenes of the life and civilization of the past.

In the Tigris-Euphrates valley, the home of ancient Sumeria, Babylonia, and Assyria, the remains of these ancient civilizations were buried under the sands of the ages. Great mounds scattered along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers contained the buried remains of antiquity. It was a Frenchman, Botta, in 1842, who made the first attack upon the mounds of the valley of the Tigris-Euphrates. On the mounds opposite Mosul on the Tigris he began his work. These mounds covered a portion of the ancient city of

Nineveh. At first excavation was largely guesswork as to where to dig the first trenches, and it depended upon chance as to whether one's efforts were to be rewarded with tangible results. But Botta persisted. Inscriptions and bas-reliefs were found, walls and monuments were uncovered. He was assisted by the artist Flandin who sketched the monuments and drew plans of the excavations. Botta had discovered a palace, that of none other than Sargon II, who destroyed Samaria and carried away into captivity the ten tribes of Israel. The reports of the discovery of this ancient palace, whose walls were covered with inscriptions and pictures describing in detail the military, social, domestic, and religious life of ancient Assyria, created tremendous excitement. What romance to see one by one the figures of ancient kings and personages known to us from the pages of Holy Writ arise out of the sands of the ages, telling us their story of love and life and action! European governments were electrified. The French Assembly in 1851 voted to fit out an expedition which was placed under the leadership of M. Place, a trained architect. He succeeded not only in finishing the work of Botta but also in excavating Sargon's fortified city, as well as other famous cities, such as Assyria's first capital, Ashur, and the ancient city of Calah.

Years before Botta began his work a young Englishman, Layard, a student of law, had come

under the spell of the Arabian Nights. He longed to see Baghdad and Babylon, Mosul, and the rest of the ancient East. He ran away from home, and after some strange and romantic experiences, crossing the desert and making his way on the ancient rivers by means of rafts and the native round-boat, he visited the mounds of Mosul. Five years later he found himself, with a small fund at his disposal, at the head of a modest expedition and working at Nimrud, the modern site of the ancient city of Calah. Here Layard made some remarkable discoveries. In a palace erected, in part, by Shalmaneser III of Assyria he found one of the most striking monuments ever unearthed. It was an obelisk of hard, black stone, covered with five rows of sculptures running around the four sides of the monument, while the balance of the space was covered with closely written cuneiform inscriptions. The scenes portrayed Shalmaneser receiving tribute from conquered nations. Later it was learned that one of the conquered kings portrayed on the obelisk was Jehu, king of Israel, 842. Thus sceptics, who declared that, unless some extra-biblical evidence was forthcoming, all Old Testament narratives must be declared fictitious, received all and more than they wanted. Here was not only an inscription telling of Jehu's conquest by Shalmaneser, but even giving a picture—a contemporaneous one—of Jehu himself. It can be easily imagined what an impression this made

upon the Western world. Money poured in, the British Museum voted funds, and a well equipped expedition was sent out under Layard's leadership. This time he was assisted by a native Christian, Rassam, and among the results was the discovery of the palace of Sennacherib, the king who attacked Jerusalem in 701, and that of Ashurbanipal, the greatest of all Assyrian kings, the Asnapper of the Old Testament. Besides the usual bas-reliefs and huge winged bulls, the cherubim of Genesis, there was discovered the now famous library of Ashurbanipal, rooms filled with many thousands of clay tablets containing literary works as well as the official archives of the Assyrian empire.

Near about the same time similar work was being done on the mounds of still more ancient cities. An Englishman, W. K. Loftus, in 1850-1854, opened trenches in a series of mounds at Warka, the ancient Erech, where he found an ancient zikkurat or "Tower of Babel." It was here, in 1912, that the German Oriental Society excavated a great temple dedicated to the goddess Nana, the Ishtar of the Old Testament. Loftus also excavated the ancient city of Larsa, thought to be the Ellasar of Genesis and the seat of the worship of the sun-god, whose temple and zikkurat were objects of veneration throughout all periods of Babylonian history.

A second French expedition under Fresnel and Oppert excavated the famous palace of Nebu-

chadnezzar, the conquerer of Jerusalem in 586. Another Englishman, J. E. Taylor, now attacked the mounds of Mugheir, which proved to be the site of ancient Ur, the home of Abraham. Here the temple of Sin, the moon-god, was unearthed and the worship to which Abraham was opposed has been studied on the basis of these and other discoveries.

Although the fame of Sir Henry Rawlinson rests primarily upon his linguistic work, his successful excavations on the site of ancient Borsippa cannot be omitted. It was here that the zikkurat, usually indentified with the Tower of Babel, was found.

For about twenty years after Rawlinson's departure from Baghdad in 1854, no excavations were carried on in Babylonia or Assyria. It was perhaps just as well, for it gave excavators and linguists a chance to get together and work on the inscriptions. This will occupy our thought in the next chapter. And as it is not our purpose to give a history of Oriental excavations it may be briefly said that from about 1870 until our own day marvellous discoveries have been made almost continuously, except during the Great War, by English, French, German, and American archaeologists in the Tigris-Euphrates valley. The history of these excavations makes fascinating reading, and one can imagine nothing more dramatic and romantic than the discovery of the Babylonian accounts of Creation and the Flood,

of the uncovering of ancient cities, such as Lagash and Kish, whose histories extend back over six thousand years, of the discovery of the archives and ledgers of the business house of Murashu and Sons, and of the discovery of the great Hammurabi Code of Laws, the most ancient and the most famous in the world. These and many other discoveries, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of inscriptions, tell a story that in sheer human interest would exceed the most stirring tales of travel and adventure.

Since the earliest times Egypt has always been the land of mystery and romance. The pages of Herodotus are never fuller or more vivid than when he is telling of Egypt. But the modern world was first really awakened to the wonders of Egypt, the richness of her life and civilization, by no less a person than the great Napoleon himself. In 1798 Napoleon and his army were encamped in the shadow of the great pyramid. Napoleon had taken with him not only warriors but savants, the result of whose activities was the publication of a colossal work in twelve volumes of plates and twenty-four of text. This is the famous *Description de l'Égypte*, edited by Vivant Denon. As the remains of Egypt's ancient past had not been so completely buried under the debris and sands of time as had those of Babylonia and Assyria, the work of excavation has been a simpler one; although the great royal tombs with their wealth of picture and writing,

hundreds of feet, some of them, into the solid rock, have tested the skill and endurance of the excavator. But until the time of the Frenchman Mariette, 1849, not much systematic work of excavation had been done. International strifes and jealousies, intensified by a desire to possess the great standing remains of ancient Egyptian civilization, added to the difficulty in accomplishing anything of a systematic character in Egypt. Men of undiscriminating zeal, such as Belzoni, Drovetti, and others destroyed more than they preserved in their endeavour to purchase "objects" for the great European Museums. Before the work of Mariette, however, we must mention that of Rosellini and Champollion in 1828, who made a second great general survey of the monuments, and that of Lepsius in 1837, who, as a result of his work, published in 1849-1858 his famous Denkmäler.

With Auguste Mariette, a brilliant French archaeologist, the period of superficial archaeology in Egypt came to an end. Now began the excavations. Mariette's first great work was the excavation of the great Serapeum, the Apis-cemetary, with the temple of Osiris-Apis and its avenue of sphinxes. Mariette was now appointed head of the Service of Antiquities and began his formation of the Cairo Museum. Apart from his activities at the Serapeum and in the necropolis at Saqqara, his great work of excavation was the uncovering at Abydos of the noble temple of

Seti I with its exquisite reliefs and its great inscriptions. To him also we owe the excavation of the great temple of Rameses III at Medinet Habu and a part of that of Hatshepsut which contains the famous reliefs of the royal expedition to the Land of Punt.

But modern scientific archaeology in Egypt had to wait for still another French genius, Gaston Maspero. In 1881 Maspero succeeded Mariette and, under his direction and inspiration, Egyptian archaeology prospered. About the same time Petrie made a complete survey of the Gizeh field and the great Pyramids, the wonders of the world, the most recent work on them being that of George Reisner of Harvard University. Maspero himself opened the Pyramid of Unas at Saqqara, which gave rise to the publication of the famous *Pyramid Texts,* which are so valuable for a study of ancient Egyptian religion.

In 1883 the English *Egypt Exploration Fund* was founded, and since that time similar societies for the excavation of ancient sites in Egypt have been founded in Germany, Switzerland, America, and elsewhere.

Maspero, assisted by Loret, in 1881 discovered the royal mummies, among them being Rameses II, the pharaoh of the Hebrew oppression in Egypt. Not only have we, then, many portrait statues of the pharaoh of biblical interest, but we also have his mummy, and can look upon his very countenance.

Among the thrilling discoveries made in ancient Egypt nothing has contributed more towards an understanding of the ancient Oriental world than the Tell el-Amarna Letters discovered by a peasant woman in 1891. These letters were written to and by Egyptian pharaohs of the fourteenth century before our era, and kings of Babylonia, Assyria, and the Hittite Empire, and Egyptian governors of the land of Canaan. They give us a most interesting picture of what Palestine was about two hundred years before the time of Moses, and they help us to understand what the land of Canaan was like where Abraham sojourned and where the Hebrews found a home after the time of Joshua.

Then came the excavation of the Labyrinth of Herodotus by Petrie, and the interesting mummy portraits of Roman Egypt, examples of the earliest oil paintings in the world. In 1894 De Morgan explored the Pyramids of Dashur, twelfth and thirteenth century pyramids, and discovered a piece of jewelry, the Pectoral of Usertsen II, unrivalled among ancient works of art. Next year Amélineau began a work which was continued by Petrie and Naville, namely, the excavation of the Royal Tombs at Abydos. In 1896 Petrie was fortunate enough to discover the famous Israel Stela of Merneptah, pharaoh of the Exodus. This monument is of importance for the light it throws upon the date of the Exodus as well as for the fact that on it we find

the earliest occurrence of the word "Israel." Many other important discoveries have been made in Egypt, among them being the Tombs of the Kings at Thebes, the so-called "Tomb of Osiris" at Abydos, the Aramaic Papyri at Elephantiné, which so wonderfully contribute to Jewish history of the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, and Naville's work on the great temple of Der el Bahari.

The most spectacular of all Oriental excavations began in 1922, when the Earl of Carnarvon and Howard Carter charmed and fascinated the whole world by the discovery and excavation of Tutankhamen's tomb.

The latest and most far-reaching of all recoveries of forgotten empires is the recovery of the ancient Empire of the Hittites which is just now going on before our eyes. As early as 1722 a French traveller, La Roque, observed some curiously engraved stones at Hamath in Northern Syria. A century later Burchardt saw also at Hamath in the corner of a house in the Bazaar a stone with a number of figures and signs which he considered a kind of hieroglyphic. Another half century elapsed when, in 1870, two Americans found some inscribed stones at Hamath, and when William Wright, an English missionary at Damascus, 1872, began a serious study of the subject. Then followed a series of travellers who made reports, from time to time, of objects seen or acquired in Syria and Eastern Asia Minor.

But the first really important stage in the recovery of this forgotten empire was when Hugo Winckler of Berlin, in 1906, began excavating the mounds of Boghazköi, the capital of the ancient Empire of the Hittites. The results of his excavations were beyond expectation. He found what was perhaps the state archives containing about 20,000 documents written in Babylonian cuneiform on clay tablets. A study of these tablets reveals the fact that they are the remains of an ancient people called the Hatti, the Kheta of the Egyptian monuments, and the Hittites of the Old Testament. Soon after his great discovery Winckler fell ill, and from then until his death shortly before the outbreak of the Great War, practically nothing was done, for students were awaiting Winckler's publication of the material. Then came the war which gave rise to further delay. However, in 1916-1917 Hrozny published a brilliant discussion of the texts, and the work is still in progress. This will be further referred to in our next chapter, on decipherment.

Thus we have followed, in the briefest of outlines, some of the most important steps in the progress made, from the beginning to our own day, by archaeologists, of laying bare the remains of mighty empires that had lived thousands of years and had passed away. Their works had been forgotten for close on two thousand years. And then came modern adventurers, explorers, excavators, archaeologists, and by per-

sistence, hard work, good fortune, and the love of ancient humanity, have made these peoples and times live again and tell us of their lives and works, their plans and purposes, their ideals and aspirations. And how much like our own they are! What a unity the human race has been found to be!

And now the Romance of these excavations! Stories of adventure thrill us. We never forget Robinson Crusoe. The thought of an exploration trip small or large fascinates us. We read with bated breath detective stories. Now, it is not too much to say that the elements of adventure, exploration, and detection are all to be found to a remarkable degree in the work of archaeology. Excavations have their disappointments just as some explorations fail to accomplish much. Lord Carnarvon spent about twenty years turning over a hundred thousand tons of debris without result—a long, tedious, expensive, discouraging thing. And it was only just on the eve of abandoning his search that the discovery was made which resounded from north to south, from east to west, of the civilized world, and electrified the hearts and imaginations of millions of people.

The Romance of Excavations! Some people see in a rose merely a flower, in a snowflake merely a bit of frozen moisture. Others see in the rose a thing of infinite wonder and beauty, and in the snowflake a marvel of nature's symmetrical perfection. Some may see in cuneiform or hiero-

glyphic merely another form of human script, others of vision and imagination see in them the life and civilization, the history and poetry, the literature and religion, the tragedy and comedy of myriads of human lives and hearts who lived and loved, who thought and worked, in far off times and places.

The Romance of Excavations tells of Egypt, Sumeria, Babylonia, Assyria, and the Empire of the Hittites. It speaks to us of the Rosetta Stone and the decipherment of the hieroglyphics of Egypt, of "Cleopatra's Needle" in Central Park, New York, on the Thames Embankment, before St. John Lateran or in Constantinople. It speaks to us of the mighty pyramids, the glorious palaces, the wondrous temples of Luxor and Karnak. It speaks of Heliopolis and Memphis, of Thebes and Babylon, and all the glory and wonder of such ancient cities. The romance of excavations thrilled Napoleon and Champollion, Mariette and Maspero, Lepsius and Naville, Carnarvon, and many others who have consecrated their lives and brilliant talents, not to commerce and finance, but to the sacred task of quickening human life by deepening its consciousness of what it owes to the ancient past. It speaks to us too of Layard, the boy of vision, and of Nineveh, the home of Assyria's ancient splendours. It speaks of Ur of the Chaldees and of Abraham the man of faith, of Hammurabi and his mighty laws, of Jehu and of Sennacherib, of Ephron the Hittite,

and of the mighty Nebuchadnezzar whom Daniel knew. Of these, and vastly more, has archaeology told us. It has kindled our imagination, broadened our vision, intensified our sympathy, and deepened our faith in our kind. It is difficult to imagine anyone who is at all interested in the finer and nobler things of life, with soul so dead as not to understand what is meant by the romance of the recovery of forgotten empires.

III. DECIPHERMENT OF INSCRIPTIONS

The second step in the recovery of forgotten empires is the decipherment of the script and the translation of the language. The story of the decipherment of ancient inscriptions is one of the most fascinating that has ever been told. There is no detective story that can compare with it. The means used by ancient peoples to give objective form to words and thoughts are fascinating in their interest. Such people had, at first, no alphabet. Modern alphabets have interesting histories. Early peoples began by drawing pictures of objects. The earliest of all scripts was pictographic. And so the earliest form of script found in the Tigris-Euphrates valley was pictographic. It became conventional and stereotyped only with the passage of hundreds of years. In the case of ancient Egypt, the script never lost its pictographic character as the script of Babylonia did.

The normal script of the Tigris-Euphrates valley was one which had developed out of a simple picture script and consisted of thousands of signs—no alphabet—but innumerable signs, like Chinese or Japanese, each made up of a series of

wedge-shaped strokes. These signs we call cuneiform (Latin, *cuneus*, a wedge). The Egyptian script remained pictographic, consisting of thou-

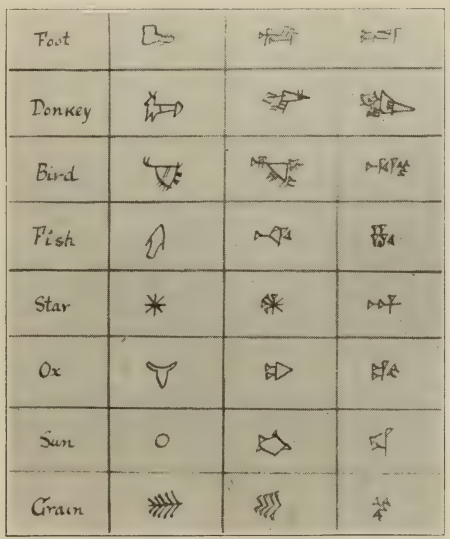


Fig. 3—EARLY AND LATE CUNEIFORM

sands of little pictures of men, animals, birds, flowers, and other objects. At a very early period a cursive form of the pictograph developed in which the pictures were written more simply and in abbreviated form. This form is called the hieratic. Later there developed a still more cur-

sive and simpler form, the demotic, but all three existed side by side down to the very end of Egyptian civilization. The Hittites also used a picture script which apparently never developed into a cursive or simpler form. But at a very early period, for ordinary purposes, the Hittites used the Babylonian cuneiform script in a similar manner to the way in which a Chinese student may transliterate his signs into Roman or English letters.

The earliest travellers in the Tigris-Euphrates valley, who saw stones and bricks bearing cuneiform inscriptions, thought they were merely decorated stones and bricks. True, the decoration was a monotonously regular one. But, at first, they never dreamed of a script. However, as time went on, and other travellers came, it was gradually surmised that the decoration might be a script and the stones and bricks might bear some message from the ancient past. In 1621 an Italian traveller, Pietro della Valle, more curious than others, copied some of the decorations and inscriptions at Persepolis in Persia and studied them at leisure. He made very little headway, but saw reason for believing that the script ran from left to right and not from right to left as most other Semitic scripts do. In 1627 an English traveller, Cotton, copied three lines, and a friend of his, Mr. Herbert, in 1677, published a facsimile copy of them in order that others might have an opportunity of examining and studying the

script. In 1711 a French traveller, the Chevalier Chardin, published twenty-three plates of the Persepolis inscription. The same text was copied in 1712 by a German physician, named Englebert Kaempfer, who decided that the script was not

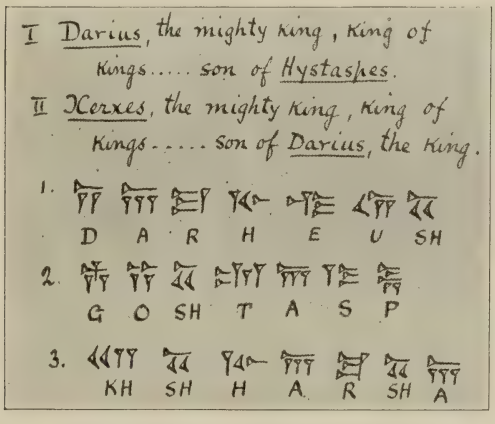


Fig. 4—KEY TO DECIPHERMENT

alphabetic but ideographic, that is, he believed that each sign gave expression to an idea, or was a complete word.

For the next fifty years very little progress was made, although many intrepid travellers and careful observers examined the inscriptions. It was not until 1785, when Karsten Niebuhr, whom we have already mentioned, and who had copied

more of the inscriptions than any of his predecessors, was successful in recognizing in the Persepolis inscriptions three different forms of cuneiform which was later called Old Persian, Median, and Assyrian. He picked out forty-two signs which he considered alphabetic, but there his discoveries ceased. In 1800 Tychsen drew the correct conclusion that the three different forms of the cuneiform represented three different languages. Working on Niebuhr's plates it was he perhaps who determined the sign which was used as a sentence divider and went so far as to essay a tentative translation of one of the smaller inscriptions, which, however, was pure guesswork, and turned out to be entirely erroneous. But a contemporary, Münter, a Dane, suggested that a certain series of seven characters occurring in all inscriptions, stood for the word king, a conjecture which finally turned out to be correct, although he himself rejected it.

Not long before the time of Tychsen and Münter, a young French linguist, Anquetil-Duperron, was busy learning to read the characters and to interpret the contents of the Avesta. Through the publication of his material scholars had before them specimens of the language employed in the days of the Persian rulers. Of course, the characters used in the Avestan manuscripts were entirely different from those found on the Persepolis inscriptions. But it was rightly assumed that the sounds behind both were the same. At

about the same time an Arabic scholar, de Sacy, in studying Greek and Pehlevi inscriptions at Naksh-i-Rustam noted a certain stereotyped order of phrases and titles in these texts. Now, it was already observed that in the Persepolis inscriptions certain groups of signs occurred frequently in all of them. It was at this point that immortal fame came to the name of a young German teacher of Greek at Göttingen, Georg Friedrich Grotefend (born 1775), who proceeded to pick out those words in the Persepolis inscription that occurred frequently in all of them, and to fit them into the scheme observed by de Sacy: "N, great king, king of kings, son of, etc." Further analogy with de Sacy's work led him to choose a word for "king" which ought to follow the name at the beginning of the group and appear several times afterwards. The diagonal sign which Münter had conjectured to be a word separator made it easy to point out a series of signs constituting a word. It was not long before Grotefend hit upon several signs occurring just where one would expect the word for king. With the dictionary compiled by Anquetil-Duperron the word for king could easily be found. Grotefend's next task was to study the signs occurring in the neighborhood of the word for king, which he guessed ought to make up the names of old Persian rulers already known to us. Further study led him to guess that the inscriptions had to do with three kings (three series of signs), which might be grandfather,

father and son, the first of which did not bear the title of king. Immediately he thought of Hystaspes, Darius, Xerxes, and de Sacy's formula gave him:

Darius, great king, king of kings, son of Hystaspes;
Xerxes, great king, king of kings, son of Darius, the king.

It was in this conjecture that his genius flashed out. He thus had from this formula an excellent starting point. The Persian word for "king" is Khsheio; and he gave to the group of signs which he ascribed to the places where he expected the word "king"—and there were several of them, all alike—the values: KH-SH-E-I-O. Then it was easy work in assigning equivalents to the signs that made up the royal names. Thus he had D-A-R-H-E-U-SH (Darius); KH-SH-E-I-O (king); G-O-SH-T-A-S-P (Hystaspes); KH-SH-H-A-R-SH-A (Xerxes)—three proper names and the word for "king" containing the value of a good many signs. This stroke of genius laid a firm foundation for the decipherment of the cuneiform script.

Other scholars now took up the task. Christian Lassen, a student of Persian, demonstrated the syllabic character of the script, and a Danish scholar, Rask, determined the value of two more signs, *m* and *n*.

In many respects, the most remarkable of all

decipherers of cuneiform was Sir Henry Rawlinson, whom we have already met as an archaeologist. While on duty as an army officer in

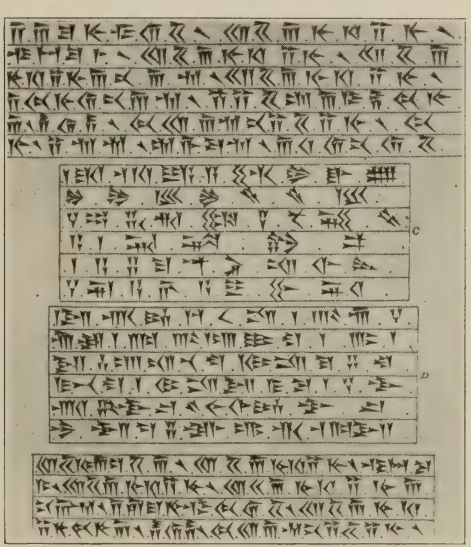


Fig. 5—SPECIMEN OF THE BEHISTUN TEXT

Persia he saw many cuneiform inscriptions. Some of them he copied, and became deeply interested in the strange characters. He prepared a list of the signs and without any knowledge at all of the work of de Sacy, Grotefend, Rask, or Lassen, started in 1835 to decipher proper names. He un-

consciously followed the same method as Grotefend and by a strange coincidence read the same three names, Darius, Xerxes, Hystaspes. His work was now mostly confined to a study of a long inscription cut into a rock at Behistun, which contained 400 lines, in each of the three different kinds of cuneiform script. The task of copying the inscription was a remarkable one for the rock rose 300 feet above the road and he had to construct a scaffold to reach it, and at certain places had to suspend himself by a rope so as to obtain as complete and accurate a copy as possible.

Here Rawlinson had an inscription with several hundred names of places which he managed to read and identify with the help of classical writers and mediaeval geographers. These names furnished him with eighteen additional values and by 1839 he was able to read two hundred lines of the Persian text of the inscription at Behistun.

Meanwhile in far-off Ireland, an English clergyman, Hincks, was labouring on the published texts. He was not a traveller, but a parish priest, who between times interested himself in this strange foreign script, and succeeded by 1847 in determining two hundred signs. Rawlinson now learned of the work of European scholars on the texts and soon entered into correspondence with them, and by comparison, rejection and modification succeeded in testing results sufficiently to

place decipherment on an absolutely sure founda tion.

Thus, step by step, the wondrous work went on, until in 1857 H. Fox Talbot proposed a test. A hitherto untranslated historical text of Tiglath-Pileser was chosen, copies were made and sent to four cuneiform students, Rawlinson, Hincks, Oppert (a French scholar), and Talbot himself. They agreed to send their translations in sealed packages to the Royal Asiatic Society. The plan was carried out and the Commission, appointed to compare the four translations, found the agreement to be so complete in all essentials as to carry conviction to the most hardened sceptic. Thus was passed the first stage in the decipherment of the cuneiform script. Of course much work was yet to be done, but scholars were now able to proceed upon the basis of assured results.

Attempts to decipher the hieroglyphic script of ancient Egypt were made many hundreds of years ago because of its apparent simplicity, which is, however, not a reality. The script is pictographic, but there came a time when one of the greatest steps in the rise and development of civilization was made, and that was when the early Egyptians devised a means of expressing abstract ideas by means of their pictographic script. Hence, the pictures that we see as hieroglyphics do not always represent what they appear to give in picture form. Thus, for example, the picture of a human eye means "to do." Attempts were made

hundreds of years ago to decipher the hieroglyphic and to read texts, some, for example, being read backwards and upside down. The decipherment was really accomplished only about a hundred years ago. After many attempts and much labour and some success on the part of others, this task was finally accomplished by the great French savant, Jean-Francois Champollion. In 1799 there was discovered near Alexandria by an officer of the Napoleonic expedition, the Rosetta Stone, containing a proclamation by the priests of Memphis setting forth the good deeds of Ptolemy Epiphanes. This proclamation was set forth in three scripts, hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek. Now, as early as 1797, Zoega had guessed that groups of characters in hieroglyphic surrounded with a cartouche or oval are royal names. It was a comparatively easy task to locate the name of Ptolemy on the Rosetta Stone and to find its equivalent in the Greek text. But Champollion had already come across an obelisk from the island of Philae in hieroglyphic and Greek, dedicated to Ptolemy and his queen Cleopatra. This obelisk contained the names of Ptolemy and Cleopatra in cartouches. The accompanying diagram (No. 6) will show how Champollion arrived at the value of twelve Egyptian hieroglyphic signs, and that they were mostly alphabetic. Thus was laid the foundation for the full decipherment of the Egyptian script. This great work of genius was accomplished in 1822, just about one hundred years ago.

Champollion's list was soon extended by the use of other cartouches. Besides, it was soon seen

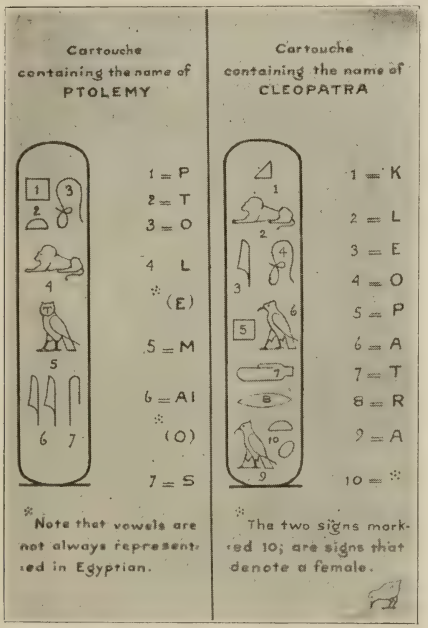


Fig. 6—KEY TO THE HIEROGLYPHIC

that the Egyptian language was the ancestor of the Coptic, which proved a most helpful clue.

It is interesting to note that it was the demotic of the Rosetta Stone which first attracted the at-

tention of scholars and a facsimile of it was prepared by the Society of Antiquities of London. De Sacy and Akerblad (a Swede) were the first to publish dissertations on it (1802). But it was Thomas Young who in 1814 published a study of the demotic characters, with an alphabet embodying Akerblad's results, and who, in 1818, contributed an extensive article on Egypt to the Encyclopaedia Brittanica with an explanation (though largely incorrect) of about two hundred hieroglyphics. Champollion, of course, worked with full knowledge of these results, and absorbed the work of Young, just as Young did that of Akerblad. But he possessed a good knowledge of Coptic which the others did not.

The work of reading the later and cursive forms of the hieroglyphic, namely hieratic and demotic, required chiefly the application of the principles laid down by Champollion. But the work has gone on for the past century, many careful students and brilliant scholars taking part. Although the great and masterful beginning was made by a French scholar, ably anticipated in some particulars by the Swede Akerblad and the Englishman Young, the best work in this difficult task, in recent times, has been done by German and English scholars, although French scholarship has by no means been lacking.

At the present time, in the matter of the Hittite hieroglyphic, we are just where we were in the matter of cuneiform and Egyptian hierogly-

phic before the epoch-making work of Grotefend and Champollion. Many attempts have been made to solve this perplexing problem, but until adequate bilinguals are found, there is little hope for complete success. Of course, we now have, thanks to Hugo Winckler, a mass of material in the Hittite language, but in cuneiform script, and an unusual phenomenon is happening. We are learning the Hittite language without being able to read their own native script. The great work of Hrozny and others is gradually resulting in a reconstruction of the ancient Hittite language, but the script remains still undeciphered.

Many attempts at decipherment have been made by various scholars—Conder, Peiser, Jensen, Thompson, Cowley, Frank, and others. Some of these failed, owing to the inaccuracy of early copies of the inscriptions, others due to a fundamental defect of method. The greatest advance, so far, is due to Sayce who has worked indefatigably at the difficult problem for forty-five years. It is to him we owe the recovery of the first small bilingual inscription, the Boss of Tarkondemos, really a silver seal with a cuneiform legend round the edge and some Hittite signs and a figure in the middle. But the help it gives is very small. The only other bilingual, called the seal of Indilimma, gives no help, as its reading is uncertain and its interpretation doubtful. The best summary of the problem and its difficulties at the present time is to be found in Cowley's

Schweich Lectures, *The Hittites*, 1920. The Hittite hieroglyphics, most interesting and most practical, with lines reading from left to right and right to left alternately, remain a challenge to the imagination, vision, detective skill, and scholarship of our age.

But the decipherment of the cuneiform and of the Egyptian and Hittite hieroglyphics is but the beginning of the second step in the recovery of forgotten empires. One has still to go a long way before the inscriptions of ancient peoples can be made to surrender their treasures. There must follow the collection, sifting, and classification of words in sign lists, word lists, and lexicons. Then the grammar and syntax must be reconstructed and made to live again. All this must be accomplished before successful translations are assured. And finally these translations must be brought together where students, incapable of making use of the original languages, may have access to them in their work of reconstructing the life and civilization of the past.

At the present time, while we have many word lists and incomplete lexicons of cuneiform and Egyptian, the publication of adequate books of this kind remains yet to be accomplished. The great Berlin Egyptian Dictionary will probably be published within the present decade. The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary may be ready within the present generation. There are fairly good grammars, although there are innumerable gram-

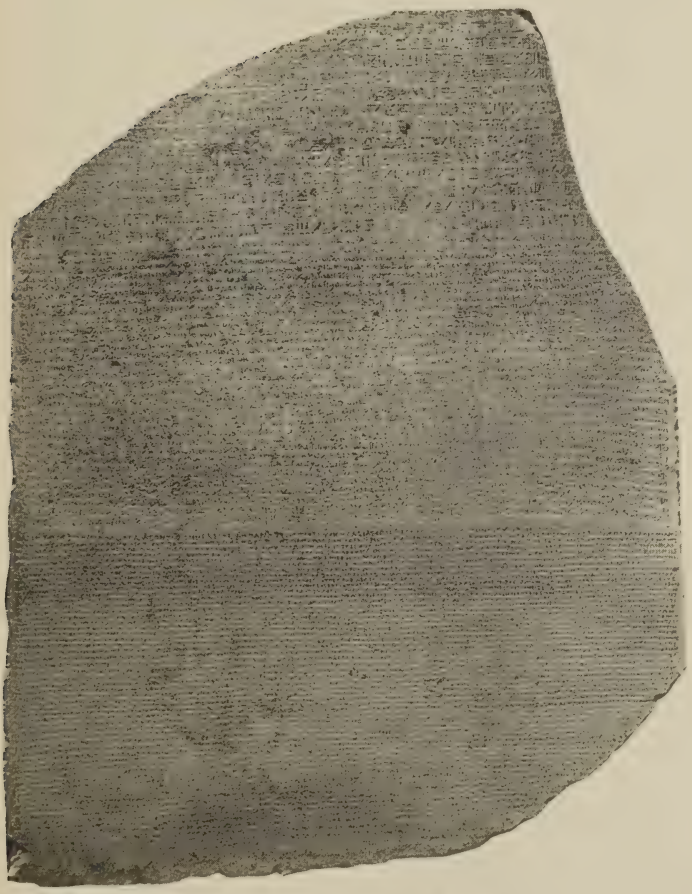


Fig. 7—THE ROSETTA STONE

matical and syntactical problems yet to be solved, and the number of scholars capable of dealing with these problems is lamentably small. As for translations of texts, they are unfortunately scattered among a hundred technical journals and other periodicals and special books with which only experts can be familiar. And finally, there are literally thousands of texts which have never yet at all been translated. What a challenge to young scholarship! What a thrill of delight one experiences when he translates a text which has remained unread and unknown for sometimes five thousand years! The few men who are capable and willing to do the work at the present time are so handicapped by the necessity of teaching and preaching to earn an honest living that they have neither time nor strength left for the severer discipline of translation and interpretation. Endowments are sadly needed for such men, and to encourage younger men who must master a dozen different languages, besides much history and philosophy, before they can even begin the arduous task of translation.

Too little has been said, so far, about the ancient Sumerian, a civilization far more ancient than Babylonian and perhaps also than Egyptian. This has been due to the fact that the script is cuneiform, and to a considerable extent, the older pictographic form of cuneiform. But the language itself is not Semitic but proto-Semitic. It is at present translatable, but not easily so.

The language is aglutinative, and bristles with unsolved problems. There is no complete sign list yet; nor can it, at present, be made, while many signs are unknown and many texts have not yet been published. There are several grammars, but

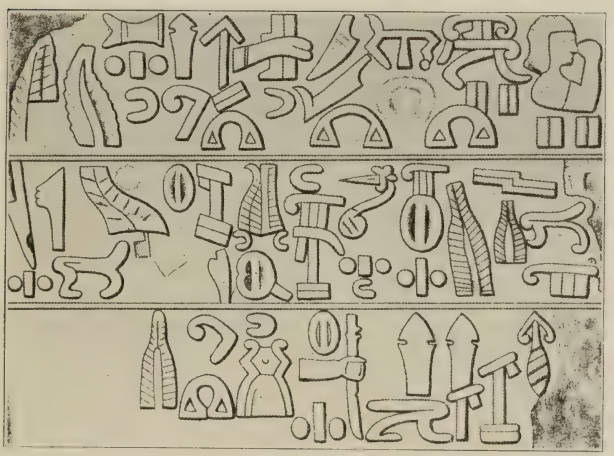


Fig. 8—A HITTITE INSCRIPTION

the structure of the verb, for example, is as yet very imperfectly understood. The number of scholars who can independently read Sumerian may be reckoned on one's fingers with ease without repeating the digits. Here, to a large extent, is virgin soil, and here is abundance of original and fascinating work to be done. There are hun-

dreds of these original texts waiting for translators; and thousands are coming and will come to light in the course of the present decade. The second step in the recovery of forgotten empires is thus an important, and also a challenging, and thrilling one.

IV. RECONSTRUCTION OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATION

Modern civilization is the heir of ancient civilization. We have built upon the foundations of the past. So in a sense ancient civilization was never lost. But of the elements of our civilization as they appeared in their own background and atmosphere we knew nothing until within the last century. The next step in the recovery of forgotten empires has to do with the building up of a picture of what ancient civilizations were. This is done by means of knowledge derived from the translated texts of the past.

At the present time a fairly comprehensive history of the ancient Oriental world exists. There are, of course, serious gaps. These will be filled up in time. But it is a comparatively easy matter for us to trace back century by century the history of Babylonia and Egypt from the beginning of our era to close on four thousand years earlier. And it can be done with a fair amount of fulness; indeed the new *Cambridge Ancient History*, a history covering the empires under consideration and confined to the Nearer Orient, consists of two volumes, each over seven hundred closely

printed pages, which bring the history down only to 1000 B.C., and these two books are not by any means exhaustive. This has been made possible by the work of excavators, decipherers, and translators.

The first task in the reconstruction of the history of the past was the establishment of a chronological background. How are we enabled to reckon back 3750 B.C.? This would not be at all possible were it not for the immense amount of chronological material which has been found in inscriptions and other texts. Then there are recorded in ancient texts and inscriptions many astronomical notes. In the case of Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian history the matter was comparatively easy. The Ptolemaic Canon served as a starting point. It furnishes the means of reckoning back to 747 B.C. Then there are the Assyrian Eponym Chronicles and Lists, which take us back to 911 B.C. Each year is accounted for in these lists. Then there are Babylonian Chronicles, Babylonian King-lists, and Sumerian King-lists that take us back, with a few gaps, to about 4000 B.C. All this material is supplemented by various kinds of recorded events and series of events. The people of the Tigris-Euphrates valley were keen students of the heavenly bodies and made numerous observations which they recorded with great care. These records have been used by modern astronomers in such a way as to corroborate the findings of dead-reckoning. The

chronological background of Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian history has thus been established with scientific accuracy.

Fig. 9—GUDEA OF LAGASH

In the case of Egypt we had, not only many astronomical notes and various lists, but also the advantage of a native chronology on the famous Palermo Stone. Then besides all that, an Egyptian historian and priest, about 250 B.C., wrote a

history of his country in Greek, fragments of which are extant. He divided his history into dynasties, which have served as an outline for our modern chronology of ancient Egyptian history.

Fig. 10—SENNACHERIB RECEIVING TRIBUTE

Then came the work of putting the flesh of history upon these skeletons of chronology. And the work has been marvellously done. So well has it been done, and so numerous have been our sources, that there are some periods in ancient

Babylonian and Egyptian history which are known better than some periods in English history. For example, we know vastly more about the reign of Hammurabi of Babylonia, about 2000 B.C., than we know about the reign of King Alfred; and we know more about the reign of Thutmose III of Egypt, about 1480 B.C., than we do about the reign of King John. This is due to the

Fig. 11—ASHURBANIPAL AND HIS QUEEN

immense amount of contemporaneous material which we possess. We can follow back, step by step, year by year, reign by reign, dynasty by dynasty, the history of Egypt or Babylonia from the latest time well into the fourth millenium before our era.

For many of these periods we possess not only state and official contemporaneous material, but we very often have individual correspondence, family archives, and material of the most personal character. By means of such material, to-

gether with contemporaneous pictures, portraits, and statues of monarchs and other personalities, we are enabled to make the lives of the ancients as vivid as the most modern of biographies. The characters of Gudea, Sargon II, Nebuchadnezzar, Hatshepsut, Ikhnaton, Rameses II, are just as vivid, and more so, than those of Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, William the Conqueror, or Peter the Great. We not only know *about* them, but we know exactly what they looked like.

Of equal importance, but perhaps more difficult, and at any rate more interesting in many respects, is the reconstruction of the religious and moral ideas and ideals of these ancient peoples. What were their ideas of god and his relationship with man? Did the ancients ever achieve monotheism? Or were they all polytheists? What was their idea of the will of god and how did that relate itself to their moral conceptions? These and many other questions must be answered. And what a rich and various world of ideas it was in which they lived! The world was peopled with gods, the divine was ever near and dear to them. They felt his continual presence. He shared with them their life. Religion and life were co-extensive. There was no separation of Church and State. It was impossible to conceive of a man without a religion. He was born into religion just as he was born a citizen of his country.

The ideas which these ancient peoples held about the gods and their relationship to mankind

and this world, and how the gods were worshipped, appeased, and propitiated have been, or are being, collected, examined, and sifted. They are legion, and many of them are difficult to classify. But the fascinating work is being done.

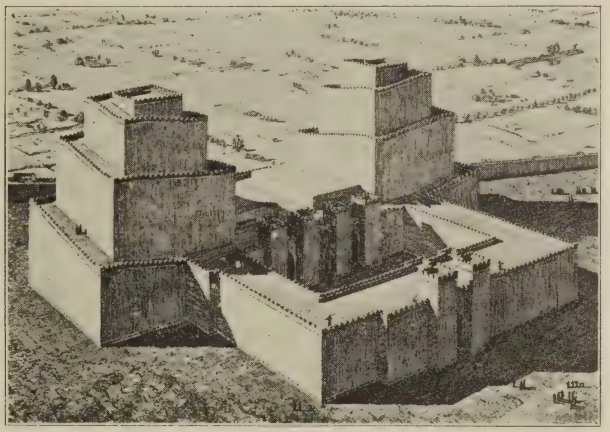


Fig. 12—AN ASSYRIAN TEMPLE

Pantheons are being reconstructed, ancient systems of theologies are being outlined, and ethical and moral ideas are being classified. It is not yet as easy to write an account of the religion, or religions, of Egypt as it is to write a history of Egypt. There are many problems yet unsolved. There are too many unrelated facts and fancies

to account for. Attempts have been made to write histories of the religions of the ancient Oriental peoples. But they are all merely tentative. Jastrow's *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, although consisting of three large volumes, is still a mere catalogue of certain aspects of Babylonian and Assyrian religion. As for a religion of Egypt no one has so far been ambitious enough to try to write one, except short sketches by various Egyptologists. Innumerable difficult texts must first be carefully studied. Great movements of thought must be classified. A keener insight into the mind of ancient men must be developed. Perhaps in twenty or twenty-five years' time we may be ready to attempt a history of the religion of ancient Egypt. Problems there are in myriads! But what a challenge to men of genius and industry.

Or think of the reconstruction of a history of the law and commerce of Babylonia and Egypt! The Babylonians were a great law-making people. One of the greatest codes of laws ever drawn up is that of Hammurabi, king of Babylonia, about 2000 B.C. There are thousands of signed contracts sealed and sworn to before witnesses, judges, and in the name of the gods. The Hittites had a great code of laws. The treaty between Rameses II of Egypt and the Hittite Hattushil is the most remarkable in ancient jurisprudence. There is hardly a phase of judicial relationship which is not covered in some form or other in

ancient legal literature. Legal marriage contracts were made, sales were legally attested, endowments were legally made, and wills were legally drawn up.

Fig. 13—A BRICK WITH NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S NAME

The commercial life of Babylonia was particularly rich. They were the great commercial people of antiquity. The Jews acquired their business ability and acumen as apprentices in Baby-

lonia. Business documents are almost numberless. We possess the archives and ledgers of many business firms. Their deeds of sale, exchange, and purchase are numerous. Their accounts were made with the utmost care, many of them sealed and signed. The Egyptians were also great merchants, carrying on a brisk international trade, with a merchant marine as early as 2900 B.C. In this field also there remains much to be done in the way of reconstruction.

The Egyptians were the great engineers and architects of antiquity. Their colossal temples, tombs, and palaces are sufficient proof of this. Their engineering skill was prodigious. Both the Egyptians and Babylonians were great artists. The seal engravings of Babylonia, the bas-relief and statuary of Egypt, the work in precious metals of both countries are too well known to need many words in proof of their artistic attainments.

It may be thought that the literature of Babylonia and Egypt consists of chronologies, histories, accounts, and laws. That is far from the truth. There are excellent chronologies, useful and instructive historical and biological accounts, interesting business transactions, and illuminating legal records, but there is much more. There are magical texts, prophecies, short stories, hymns, wisdom literature, poems and epics. It is difficult to appreciate the beauty of ancient poetry because of the fact that the nature and structure

of their versification are so different from ours. For example, they made practically no use of what we call metre and rhyme. Instead, they depended almost entirely upon rhythm. And until modern poets arise who will take the Epic of

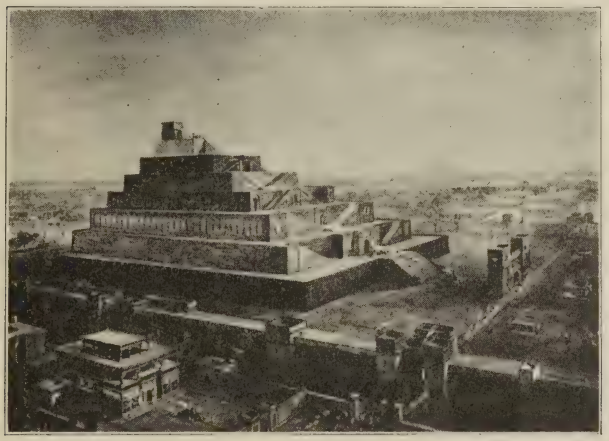


Fig. 14—BABYLON RESTORED

Gilgamesh or the Poem of Pentaur and put them into modern poetic form we shall never be able fully to realize the beauty and grandeur of ancient Babylonian and Egyptian literature. But at present there is abundant evidence to show that in the original form of Babylonian and Egyptian literature there is a beauty and

grandeur comparable to that found in the best of modern literary productions.

And yet a history of ancient law, commerce, art, engineering, architecture and literature remains to be written. Material there is in great abundance. Attempts have been made. Excellent small books have been written, especially on art and law, but the great task of reconstructing an adequate idea of these arts and crafts must yet be attempted.

Then there is the history of Babylonian and Egyptian science—astronomy, geometry, arithmetic, chemistry, medicine, the calendar, the alphabet—the early history of all these disciplines belongs to Egypt and Babylonia. There is abundant material already published. There is more, not yet published, awaiting the industry of the scholar.

These, among many other phases of life, must be studied and reconstructed before an adequate picture of the political, social, domestic, and religious life of the ancient Orient can be reclaimed. The work of the recoverer of forgotten empires is as broad as human life itself. There is no phase of modern life without its counterpart in the life of the past. And many phases of modern life can be thoroughly understood only in the light of ancient civilization. The writing of a history of ancient Oriental civilization will be a mighty task. Of course, no one man will be capable of doing it. There must be coöperation and collabora-

tion, and even that can be done only after many years of collecting, sifting and examining.

In the reconstruction of ancient life and civili-

Fig. 15—RAMESES II.

zation there are innumerable special problems which have to be discussed, and, if possible, solved. In fact, before the reconstruction can at all be accomplished completely thousands of spe-

cial questions must be answered—questions that are most fundamental and basic. Indeed, less than twenty years ago, there were great Orientalists who doubted the very existence of a Sumerian language, and, of course, of a Sumerian people. But, today, no one doubts it. But there are still many questions to be answered about the Sumerians. What was their origin? Whence did they originally come? Was their original home in Southern Russia or in China? There are those who hold the former and those who hold the latter. There are most interesting similarities between early Sumerian thought, language, art, and writing, and that of early China. Indeed the physiognomy of both peoples is wonderfully alike. Then there are those who see in the Sumerians an indigenous people whose original home was either in the mountains east of the Tigris-Euphrates valley or in the valley itself. All such —and many more questions—must be answered before we shall feel that we know much about the Sumerians.

And yet we do know a great deal about them. We know much about their religious life, for we have much of their religious literature to read; we know about their kings and great men for we have their records and the records of their wars and political acts; we know about their social and commercial life because we have detailed accounts of various phases of both; we know about their religious and moral life for we have hun-

Fig. 16—IKHNATON (AMENHOTEP IV)

dreds of poems, liturgies, hymns, and moral precepts, and we even know what they looked like for we possess pictures, drawings, bas-reliefs, and statues of them, works of art contemporaneous with the subjects of which they treat.

We find the Sumerians in the fourth millenium before our era inhabiting the southern part of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, possessing a language already developed out of the pictographic stage, a literature of remarkable power, a complicated religious life, an art already far from the initial stage, and a political, social, and domestic life so complicated and so far developed as to demand a period of thousands of years for its development.

There is also the question of the origin and home of the ancient Egyptians. No completely satisfactory hypothesis has as yet been advanced. There are various theories. The Egyptian language, so African in vocabulary, so Semitic in structure, presents a difficult problem. But most difficult of all is the question of the antiquity of their civilization. Consider, for example, early Egyptian art. During the period of the early kings of the Old Kingdom, about 3000 B.C., there suddenly appeared in Egypt a highly artistic work, full of character, action, and anatomical detail. Some of the highest forms of art are found in perfection. Thus, the head of an early king, with its wonderful accuracy of facial curves, is equal to any later work—perhaps the head of Namer of the First Dynasty. Then consider the

noble spaciousness and grandeur of conception expressed by the simple execution of the statuary of the Pyramid Kings. There is nothing superfluous, nothing coarse, nothing trivial, for example, in the statuette of Khufu, a little figure in ivory, not more than a quarter of an inch long, but possessed with an immensity of energy and will which is almost beyond imagination. The life-size statue of Khafre, majestic, serene, powerful, is the finest to be found anywhere. The reliefs and wooden panels of the same early period have a detail, a fineness, boldness, and vigour that was never surpassed in any later phase of the life of Egypt—a great artistic country.

In like manner the architecture, engineering, and literary skill of the earlier period in Egyptian civilization was never later excelled, and in some respects, never equalled. Now, thousands of years previous to 3000 B.C. must have been consumed in the development of such an art and such technique. The history of that earliest period can only as yet be surmised. We know practically nothing about it.

It is sometimes thought that we have a pretty full knowledge of the Babylonians and their civilization. We know that they were the heirs of Sumeria. We know that what we call the Babylonian cuneiform is really Sumerian, and what we call Babylonan religion is, in reality, a developed form of Sumerian religion. But what was the origin of the Babylonians and whence came

they? It has hitherto been assumed that they came from South Arabia. Recently, however, the researches of Professor Clay of Yale University are making that assumption a very difficult one to maintain. He thinks that they came from the northwest, from Amurru, and gives evidence which he thinks will prove that in Syria there once existed a great empire, almost as great as Babylonia itself, which he calls the "Empire of the Amorites". Professor Clay is a great pioneer. Very few will follow him as yet in this matter, but it is not unlikely that, twenty years hence, the ancient history of Amurru will be such as to demonstrate Clay's hypothesis.

The origin of Assyria is still very much in the dark, and many details in her later history are only gradually being cleared up. Professor Olmstead recently completed a large volume on the history of Assyria, and just before going to press, only in time to include it, an Assyrian text was published in England which entirely upset all theories about the manner and time of the fall of Nineveh. We now know that Nineveh fell not in 606, as formerly believed, but six years earlier, in 612.

The reconstruction of Hittite civilization is yet in its very infancy. The language has not been fully deciphered and the native script is yet completely unknown. Dictionaries and grammars must be built before the texts and inscriptions can be read. In fact, according to latest investi-

gations, the Hittite Empire was composed of various groups of people speaking at least eight different languages. So we may not accurately

Fig. 17—TUTANKHAMEN

speak of a Hittite language, meaning thereby the language of the Empire of the Hittites, but of a Hatti language, the language of perhaps the dominating nation in the Hittite group. At any rate, not only the language, but also the history, re-

ligion, culture, political, social, and domestic life of the empire remains yet to be reconstructed.

And yet in the thirteenth century before our era the Hittite empire was powerful enough to curb the power of powerful Egypt, and the Hittite king Hattushil made a treaty with the great Rameses II on perfectly equal footing. Moreover, the Hittites were probably the link between the Orient and Europe. This probably will be demonstrated or refuted when we have learned, among other questions, the origin of the Hittites and their relationship to the Indo-European group whose languages the Hittite tongues so closely resemble.

Thus the third step in the recovery of forgotten empires, full of problems, bristling with difficulties, is, in some respects, the most interesting of all. The scope of work here is as broad as humanity itself. There is not a single phase of human interest and of human life which does not yet await the work of the industrious investigator. Nor is industry alone sufficient. He must have imagination, sympathy, the power to visualize ancient customs, ideas, life, and thought, and using the chips according as they fall from the tools of the investigators and pioneers, fit them together and build up the grand structure of ancient Oriental civilization.

V. THE CO-ORDINATION OF THE CIVILIZATIONS OF ANCIENT EMPIRES

Excavation, decipherment, and reconstruction are the three great steps to be taken, one after the other, in the recovery of forgotten empires. Nothing can be done until the remains of ancient civilizations have been uncovered and exposed to view and studied. Then, and only until then, can the linguist and historian begin their task. When these three steps shall have completely been taken we shall be in a position to witness the full flower of ancient life. It may never be possible to complete it. It is an ideal at which to aim. Then the life and thought of each separate empire will stand out complete, but as yet unrelated, uncoordinated. The coördination of separate ancient civilizations is the subject of this chapter.

Ancient empires could no more successfully live in isolation than can modern countries. Egyptian civilization influenced Babylonian, and Babylonian civilization influenced Egyptian, and they both influenced and were influenced by Hittite civilization. One of the great and interesting problems of coördination is the relationship between Sumeria and Egypt, and Babylonia and

Egypt. Some scholars go so far as to think that Menes of Egypt and Naram-Sin of Babylonia came into contact—that the Manium, king of Magan, whom Naram-Sin defeated, was Menes. This is highly questionable, but is an indication of how close scholars feel that Babylonia and

Fig. 18—BITS OF THE BABYLONIAN CREATION AND FLOOD

Egypt were. During the Kassite period we have abundant evidence of relationship between the two great empires, indeed we have some of the very letters which were exchanged between the pharaohs of Egypt and Babylonian kings. Furthermore, the fact that the Egyptian language is Semitic in structure shows close relationship, at a very early period, between Egypt and the Semitic world; and this relationship can be, and

has been traced, at intervals, between the two empires from the earliest to the latest times. As far as Assyria is concerned, at various times throughout her history she came into violent conflict with Egypt, and at one time for a short period had conquered Egypt. On the other hand, Egypt sent many military expeditions into Assyria, and there is no reason to believe that military operations were the only occasions on which the two great empires came into relationship.

The Empire of the Hittites occupied a middle position and came into contact with both the Babylonians and the Egyptians. As early as 1800 B.C. the Hittites raided Babylonia, and by 1400 B.C., Shubbiluliuma, a great Hittite king, was strong enough to exact a treaty from Egypt, and shortly afterwards Mutallu made another treaty with Egypt, and still later Hattushil made his famous treaty with Rameses II. At about the same time Hattushil formed an alliance with Babylonia against Assyria. But these are mere indications of the continuous cultural and commercial relationships between the Hittites and Babylonia and Egypt.

There were continuous migrations and emigrations from one part of the Oriental world to another. One example of these was the Hyksos movement into Egypt about 1675 B.C. The origin of the Hyksos is not certainly known. They may have been related to the Kassites who conquered Babylonia about 1750 B.C., or perhaps they were

of Syrian origin. At any rate, they conquered Egypt and reigned there for a hundred years, when they were expelled by Ahmose I.

The Hyksos movement is an important one, for about the same time the "Sons of Israel" made

Fig. 19—"A TOWER OF BABEL"

their way into Egypt. It has naturally been thought that there is some relationship between the "Sons of Israel" and the Hyksos. What that relationship was no one, at present, knows. But the question is provocative, and it is interesting. The Hyksos made a profound impression upon

the Egyptians. They introduced the war-like use of the horse, and so aroused Egypt that the inhabitants of that country, temporarily at least, became war-like and expelled their teachers with great violence.

Fig. 20—MUMMY OF THE PHARAOH OF THE OPPRESSION

The little strip of country which later became Palestine was at one time Babylonian, at another, Egyptian, and at still another, Hittite. It was the highway between Babylonia, the country of the Hittites, and Egypt. As early as 2900 B.C. Lugal-zaggisi ruled from the Persian Gulf to the

Mediterranean, and before 2700 B.C., Shargali-sharri, son of Naram-Sin, subdued the West. From 2900 B.C. until the final capture of Jerusalem in 586 by Nebuchadnezzar II, Babylonia looked upon the West as in some sense hers. The Hittites were victims of a similar notion, and so were the Egyptians. As for the Hittites, they so impressed themselves upon the later inhabitants of Palestine, the Hebrews, that one of the greatest of the Hebrews could refer to the Hittite as the mother of Jerusalem (Ezek. 16:3).

As early as the time of Snefru, 2900 B.C., Egypt had direct relations with Syria and Palestine, and Pepi I 2580 B.C., set out to conquer it, and by 1860 B.C. Sesostris III had a firm hold upon Palestine and established his power pretty firmly upon Gezer. Thutmose I, in 1530 B.C., conquered Syria and extended his sway as far as the Euphrates, and from that time until Rameses II Syria and Palestine were Egyptian or largely under Egyptian influence.

During these later years there were still in Egypt many Asiatics, and among them the "Sons of Israel". During the reign of Merneptah, son and successor of Rameses II, apparently the last wave of these Asiatics, made their way out of Egypt. This movement we call the "Exodus". Now, there are still many unsolved problems connected with the Exodus in spite of the wealth of our Old Testament material. Because of the fact that since the famous Tutankhamen excavations,

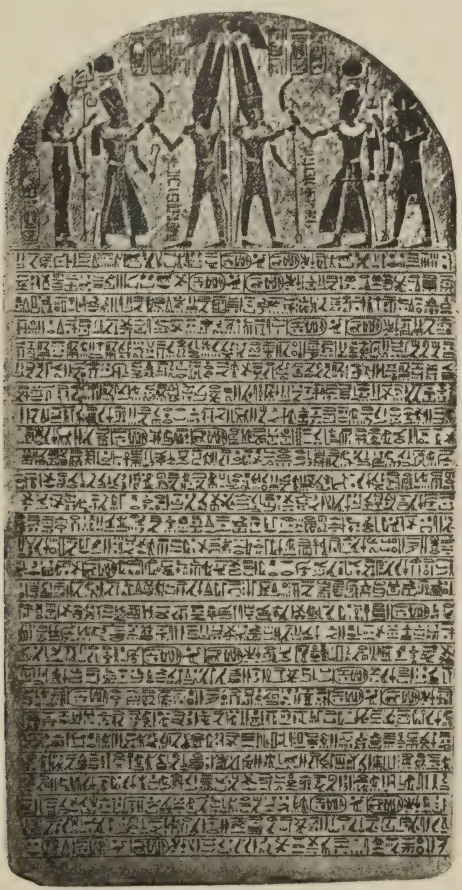


Fig. 21—STELA OF THE PHARAOH OF THE EXODUS

some writers seriously connected that pharaoh with the Exodus, we see how uncertain the question of the date of the Exodus still is. The chances are that the Exodus covered a series of years beginning perhaps as early as 1450 B.C. and extending down to the third year of the reign of Merneptah, 1222 B.C., when the remnant of the "Sons of Israel" in Egypt made their way out and headed for the Land of Promise. At any rate, this is the only hypothesis which, at present, seems to account for the conflicting extra-biblical data as well as for the conflicting chronological material bearing upon the subject in the Old Testament itself.

The work of coördination deals with all realms of human life and thought. If these ancient empires came into military conflict and social and commercial intercourse, they also influenced one another culturally and religiously. They were all polytheists—that is certain. But is there any evidence of finer thinking and did one culture influence the other? We know that while the Babylonians were polytheists there were tendencies here and there towards what, later, in Israel, became monotheism. There was, at any rate, what we call henotheistic thinking in Babylonia and Assyria. A similar statement holds true for Egypt. The Egyptians were polytheists. There was a tendency among Egyptian religious thinkers towards monotheism, and they undoubtedly gave expression to ideas which we may associate

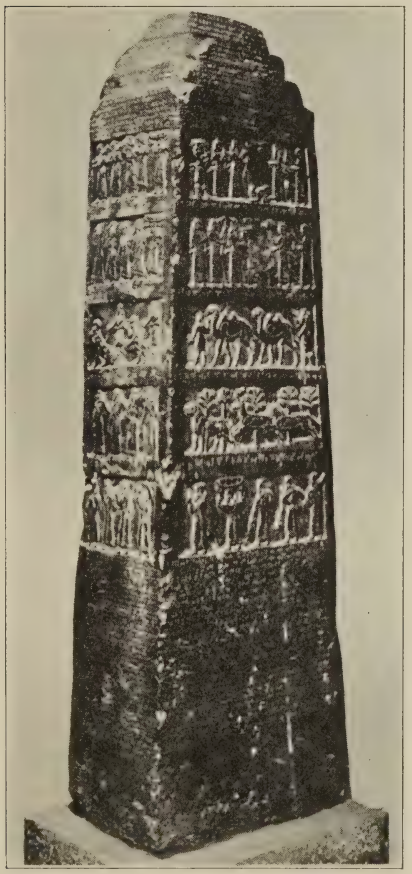


Fig. 22—BLACK OBELISK, PORTRAYING JEHU

with henotheism. But did they develop a monotheism? The question has been answered in the affirmative by several students of Egyptian religious thought. They believe that Ikhnaton about 1375 B.C. developed such a theory. If he did, then others earlier than his time did. Not as dramatically and ferociously, not as narrowly and with as much bigotry and fanaticism, but with the same reality, if we grant that Ikhnaton really did. But it is indeed very questionable whether we can apply the name of montheism which we apply to Judaism or Christianity to the religion of Ikhnaton. In any case, the interrelationship of religious ideas, the monotheism of Judaism, and the Ikhnaton and Marduk movements demand careful and patient study. They are fascinating questions and will receive the most careful attention.

Then there are questions of moral thought. A study of Babylonian, Egyptian and Old Testament morals and moral standards reveals very many interesting things. There is the great moral movement of the Twelfth Dynasty in Egypt and the great moral elements in the Hammurabi Code. There are the moral preachers of Israel in the Eighth Century before the Christian era. A comparison between the social, family, national, international, and transcendental morals of ancient peoples makes interesting reading. What were their moral ideals and standards and what were their moral sanctions? These and many other

moral and ethical questions demand an answer.

Quite recently a Hittite code of laws has been published and already we are comparing it with the Code of Hammurabi, with the Assyrian Code, itself but recently published, and finally with the Mosaic Code. There are most interesting parallels and contrasts, and yet the study in coördination of the laws of these various empires has only just begun.

No more interesting field of research exists than that of comparative literature. And here we have it in all its interest in the matter of Oriental literature. The accounts of creation in Babylonian, Assyrian, and Egyptian literature. The accounts of the Flood. The lending and borrowing of mythological material, of prophetical material, of poetical material. Just recently a newfound Egyptian Book of Proverbs has been published, and scholars are comparing it with the Old Testament Proverbs. There are word for word borrowings and lendings. The evidence of coördination here is beyond question. The one author had the work of the other before him—this is certain. Only a few year ago the "Babylonian Job" was discovered, and how wonderfully similar the problem and its discussion to the Old Testament Book of Job!

Babylonia, Assyria, the Hittites, and the Egyptians read each others literature almost as freely as modern nations do. In fact, they had their own *lingua franca,* as the Tell el-Amarna Letters

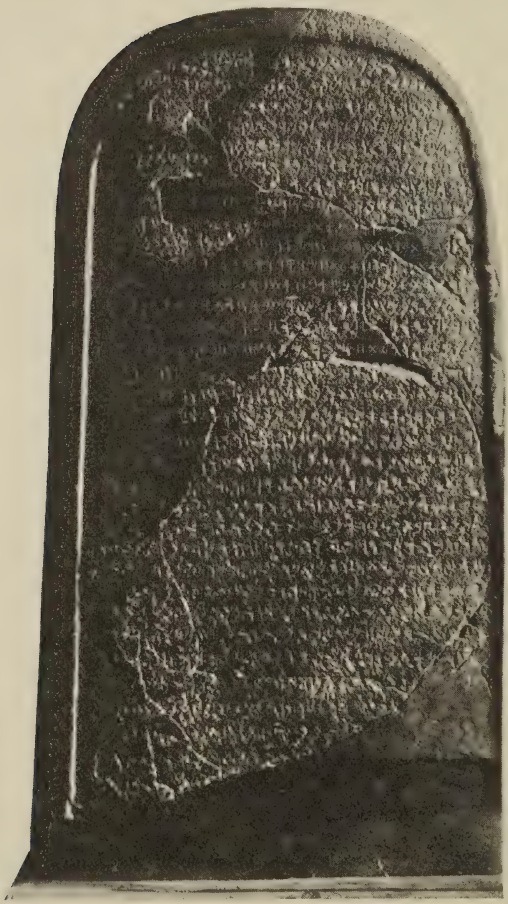


Fig. 23—THE MOABITE STONE

clearly demonstrate, and they had a universal script as the Boghazköi inscriptions show. By these means there flowed over the great network of highways that bound together Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Palestine, Syria, and the land of the Hittites a correspondence which was charged with political, social, domestic, religious, and cultural ideas of all possible kinds and degrees. In this relationship the student has an endless field of research. He must test out the question of coördination in every detail of culture and civilization. It is not necessary only to reconstruct a picture of ancient life and thought in Babylonia, Assyria and the lands of Egypt and of the Hittite separately; even before that is done the student feels obliged to study the interrelationships and coördinations between these various centres of culture and civilization. It is only in this way that a true and well-balanced picture of the ancient world can be reconstructed. The work of coördination is of prime importance in the recovery of forgotten empires.

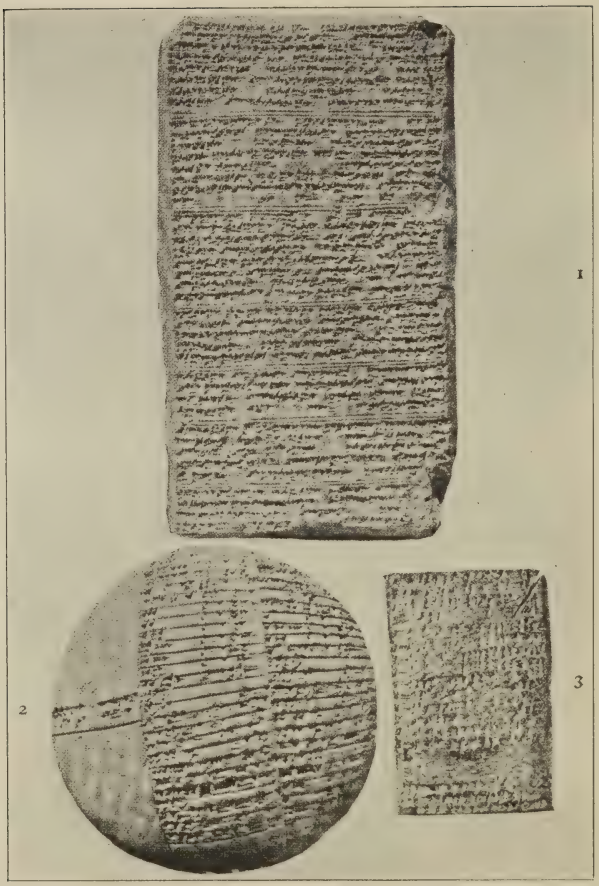
These, then, are the four steps to be taken in the work of recovery: Excavation, decipherment, reconstruction, and coördination, and in this order. One is as important in its way as the other. Each requires special talents and aptitudes; each has its appeal; and each is thrilling and fascinating in itself. There are difficulties to be overcome in preparing oneself for work in these fields. But if we crave adventure and the thrill

of discovery and detection there is no field which offers richer rewards than does Oriental research. It appeals to imagination, to ideals, to the practical and useful desire to know the past not only for its own sake, but for the sake of the present and future as well.

VI. OUR INTEREST IN THE PAST

With the improvement of social conditions in modern countries and the increase of a certain amount of leisure generally there is to be noted a corresponding increase in interest in learning, culture, and civilization. It is a comparatively easy matter to arouse public interest in archaeology nowadays. The popularity of Tutankhamen is an indication of the proof of that. Men are generally interested in the origin of things, in the rise and gradual development of civilization. This interest is, in part, due to the hold which the doctrine of evolution has taken upon the minds of people. We realize how gradually out of an earlier condition and state present conditions and states have grown and developed. Like following a stream back to its source, so it is fascinating to follow back, step by step, any given phase of thought or endeavour. This may be called a general interest in archaeology.

There are numerous particular and individual ways in which we are interested in the recovery of forgotten empires. There is, for example, what might be called a "biblical" interest. We are concerned in the affairs of Babylonia and Egypt be-



1. A TELL EL-AMARNA TABLET
2. COMMERCIAL DOCUMENT
3. LEGAL DOCUMENT

Fig. 24

cause they are "biblical" lands, because the Babylonians and Egyptians came into such close touch with Bible times and characters. A study of Babylonian and Egyptian life and culture furnishes the indispensable background against which we are enabled to study the Bible. It creates an atmosphere in which alone we can understand the Bible. Think of the earliest Old Testament historical period, the age of the patriarchs. How very little is our Old Testament information about that period. How little we learn from the Bible about Palestine at that early period. But what we call "extra-biblical" material, that is, the knowledge about Palestine which we derive from Babylonian and Egyptian sources, is very great. By means of the extra-biblical material we have been able to reconstruct a fairly vivid picture of the history, thought, life, and civilization of Palestine previous to the time of Abraham and after his journey westward. The same is true of any other period of Old Testament history. Archaeology furnishes us with an excellent background and atmosphere in which Old Testament history can be satisfactorily studied.

The Tell el-Amarna letters have made Palestine and Syria of the fourteenth century before our era a living land, and so has Egyptian material for the period of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt and for the Exodus. And then think of what the Assyrian inscriptions of the tenth, ninth, eighth, and seventh centuries have done for

our knowledge of the period of the divided kingdoms in Israel. The Neo-Babylonian, Persian, and Egyptian periods illuminate at almost every

Fig. 25—PILLARS IN THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK

step the history and life of Israel down to the latest stages of her existence as a nation.

Archaeology not only furnishes a background, an atmosphere for biblical studies, but it also

serves to illustrate certain biblical customs and usages. It even explains and confirms many difficult problems and doubtful situations, and it sometimes—in fact, very often—contributes to our knowledge of the biblical world. There is a sense in which it may be said that archaeology is peculiarly a biblical subject. The interest in Oriental archaeology, at least, arose and was supported, at first, in biblical circles. In fact, it is people who are primarily interested in the Bible who now most effectually back and support Oriental archaeological expeditions. The enthusiasm aroused in England, France, Germany, and America from the earliest days of archaeology down to the present day has been due to lovers or students of the Bible. So our first particular interest in archaeology is biblical.

Individual interests in the recovery of forgotten empires are legion. There is not a profession or an avocation in life which does not find itself related to the ancient past. A man may be a merchant bent on, and engaged in, making money, and yet if he thinks at all, will immediately respond to an appeal for interest in archaeology. The history and nature of his calling will bring that about. Tell him of the ancient business houses of Babylonia, show him the ledgers of Babylon or the contracts of Ur; read to him the business letters and transactions of Umma and Lagash; take him into the market places of these ancient cities of commerce and see how he will

respond and react. How did the ancients carry on trade—what was their money like—how did they borrow, and what percentage did they pay? How

Fig. 26—ONE OF THE GREAT OBELISKS

did they create markets and how did they compete with other merchants? What were some of the great banking concerns of Babylon, and how did they carry on their business? These and many other questions can be answered with consider-

able detail. And it is stimulating to a modern business man to realize that his profession has a long, interesting, and honourable history.

Any real architect is interested in the history of his profession, and a study of it will take him back through European to Oriental architecture. The home of great architecture in the Orient is Egypt. With what delight he would visit the remains of the great Temple of Amon at Karnak and try to visualize it as it was when intact. That immense sacred enclosure, covering two million and a quarter square feet, large enough to accommodate St. Peter's, Milan, Seville, Florence, St. Paul's, Cologne, York, Amiens, and Antwerp. The temple itself covers four hundred thousand square feet and is as large as St. Peter's, Milan and Notre Dame put together. The Pillared Hall covers fifty thousand square feet, large enough to accommodate Durham cathedral and still have five thousand square feet to spare. Its one hundred and twenty-two pillars are each large enough to give place for one hundred men standing side by side upon the top. The vast temple was seventeen hundred years in building. Nor is it only remarkable for its size. The perfection of proportion, the symmetry, the fineness of detail, the beautiful carving and tracery, the delicate finish of the mighty columns, are just as remarkable in their way. The whole is a source of amazement but a delight to the eye.

We very often imagine tombs to be dreary

places, and we have an idea that the Egyptians were a solemn people because of the large part which tombs have played in the reconstruction of our knowledge of ancient Egypt. But the Egyp-

Fig. 27—SILVER VASE OF ENTEMENA

tians were not a solemn people; neither were their tombs dreary places. Their tombs were magnificent palaces. That of Seti I, for example, was three hundred and twenty-eight feet long and contained fourteen rooms and corridors. It was

hewn out of the solid rock, the sarcophagus chamber being forty-three by seventeen feet. Moreover, the whole tomb was a work of art, and its walls were beautifully decorated and painted. But it was not by any means the largest tomb, for one has been found which measured eight hundred and seventy feet in length.

The beautiful temple of Philae is one which an architect would never forget. Egypt is the ancient land of wonderful architecture, and much which used to be ascribed to other civilizations for their origin are now known to have arisen in Egypt. An excellent illustration of this is the basilica form of church architecture which was first conceived by Egyptian architects.

The material used by Babylonian architects was very perishable, hence the destruction of most of their architecture. But we have sufficient left to be able to show that the Babylonians had a most interesting type of architecture, and the palaces of Assyria and the temples of Babylonia were magnificent structures.

But it is the artist, perhaps, who has more to learn from Egypt and Babylonia than anyone else, for the Egyptians and Babylonians were great artists.

In Egypt art in its perfection may be traced back to the earliest historic days. The Egyptian artist began by attempting to realize the useful, but it was not long before he was not satisfied unless he could produce nothing but beautifully use-

ful things, for his native love of elegance, of nature, and of humour all combined and conspired to bring about beauty. Perhaps the primal element in Egyptian art was the attempt to capture

Fig. 28—AN ASSYRIAN CHERUB

mortal life for the future, and in trying to do that, he produced works of beauty.

Already in the Old Kingdom the Egyptian artist was not only highly skilled in mechanical accuracy and regularity in which action was duly

emphasised, but his work was also full of character and marked by great anatomical detail, and by the pyramid age he could express spaciousness and grandeur by simple means in which nothing was superfluous, coarse, or trivial.

The two great artistic periods in Egypt, next in importance to the Old Kingdom, were the periods of the Twelfth and Eighteenth dynasties. The art of the Twelfth dynasty was severely beautiful in taste and sense of proportion. That of the Eighteenth dynasty was less honest, but more subtile and a little artificial. The Twelfth dynasty was a beautiful young woman, the Eighteenth was not exactly young but yet charming. The statuary of the Twelfth dynasty was clean and highly-finished and strong in facial detail, but it possessed neither the grandeur of the early period nor the vivacity of the Eighteenth dynasty. The reliefs of the Twelfth dynasty were perfect in the refinement and detail of facial curves, and severely restrained without the slightest trace of emotion. Splendid inlaid work was done—splendid jewelry of gold with cloisonné ornamented in fine stone, glass of superb brilliancy, scarabs of spiral and lily-spiral designs, and costumes of the simplest and most graceful forms.

The art of the Eighteenth dynasty was one of emotion but with breadth, fulness and vigour of character gone. It was graceful in outline, vivacious in manner, romantic in style, and possessed a sauciness which was very attractive. Ikhnaton

kissing his wife in public or dancing her on his knee is a good example. But the statuary was magnificent, witness the superb statue of Rameses II at Turin, and the painted bas-reliefs were splendid, although there was a certain amount of repetition.

In painting, much progress was made during the Eighteenth dynasty—brilliant effects were produced by painting on flat, and free-hand painting developed considerably as may be seen in the tomb of Userhat at Thebes. The famous dinner-party done in fresco, or rather distemper, is a brilliant example of this type of art. There was also a great deal of delicate art expended on toilet articles and metal work was perfected. The best illuminated manuscripts known to Oriental art were done during this period, and in this connection, reference may be made to the artistic work done by ancient Egyptian humourists, for example, the comic animals acting the parts of men, as one may examine in a papyrus in the British Museum.

The reign of Ikhnaton was not only a revolutionary period in religion but likewise in art. It was a period of naturalism and freedom from convention. And yet it was a period of eccentricities. Ikhnaton desired to be ugly, and he was thus represented. To some extent the art of his period was influenced by the Aegean as may be seen in the spiral volute decorations in Ikhnaton's palace. For a time art became queer and

ugly. The clustered vases in aragonite of the time of Tutankhamen are positively ugly, comparable to some of the early Victorian atrocities in marble. But the miniature work of Tutankhamen's time is beyong criticism. Witness the work on a

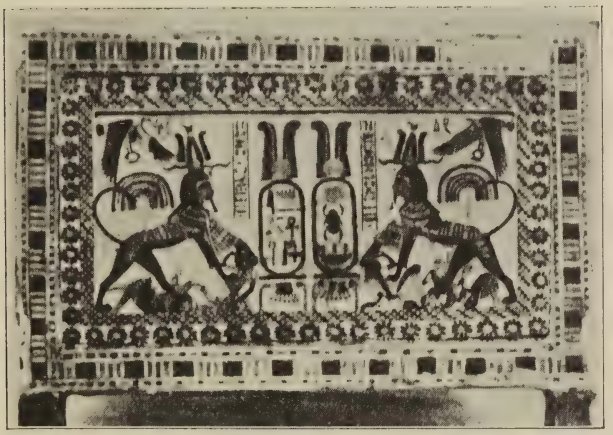


Fig. 29—AN INLAID END OF ONE OF TUTANKHAMEN'S BOXES

box found in his tomb, or the back of his royal chair, somewhat similar to that of Albrecht Duerer, or to the finest Japanese work of a century or two ago. Many other works of art of the time of Tutankhamen have been highly praised, for example, it has been said of the royal chair that, in art and craftsmanship, it is one of the

finest pieces of work now in existence from any age, that the granite lion of Tutankhamen, in the British Museum, is the finest piece of animal sculpture known to the ancient world, and that the general richness of the art of that period, as revealed in Tutankhamen's tomb, is not vulgar and ostentatious magnificence, but tempered richness of refined art, like that of a Ghiberti or a Celleni, or that of the reign of Louis XIV.

During the reign of Seti I there was a return to reality. The great school of Seti I adopted the best of Ikhnaton's art, and improved upon it. Seti I himself was artistic, and his artists were suave, urbane, cultured, formal, graceful, elegant, and exquisite. They drew the profile with a single bold sweep, their chiselling was sure and finished, their relief work was rounded and softened, their composition was faultless and their motives possessed cohesion and unity with emphasis on the right place. All this and much more is to be seen in the magnificent procession scene in the temple of Rameses I, where one is delighted with those slender, graceful figures, the rustling of whose draperies one can almost hear.

After the time of Seti I there was a gradual decline until the Twenty-sixth dynasty when there was a kind of renaissance, after which came the archaizing fashion of the latest period of Egyptian art.

Babylonia was poorer in art material than was Egypt. She had to content herself, to a large ex-

tent, with clay. But, in spite of that, much of her clay statuary is admirable. When, however, she secured stone with which to work she accom-

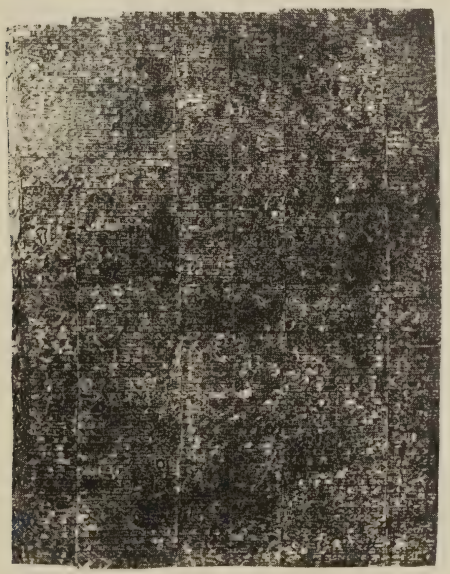


Fig. 30—PORTION OF THE CODE OF HAMMURABI

plished wonderful things. The diorite statue of Gudea, or the dog carved out of steatite, with sufficient accuracy as to allow us to recognize the particular breed of mastiff he was, or the gro-

tesque composite monsters, so powerfully done, are works which only the finest artists could produce. In metal there is nothing in any age of Oriental art finer than the famous silver vase of Entemena of Lagash, about 2850 B.C., or than the famous bronze doors at Balawat which have been compared with the Baptistry doors at Florence.

Babylonian and Assyrian artists excelled in their wonderful bas-reliefs, some of the finest of which are those found on the walls of Ashurbanipal's palace, showing the king and his queen at tea in their garden, or others of hunting scenes. Their sealed cylinders also should be mentioned, for some of them are of the most exquisite workmanship.

In engineering the Egyptians especially excelled. Modern engineers are yet at a loss to know how the great stone monoliths (some measuring over one hundred and five feet, weighing 350 tons, whose breaking strain is 2,560 pounds to the square inch) were quarried, transported, and set in place. The English had their difficulties in transporting one of the smallest of these Egyptian monoliths to London, and so did Americans in transporting from Egypt the obelisk now in Central Park, New York. But we have a picture of the way in which engineers loaded two great monoliths, each over ninety-seven feet long, and each weighing about 350 tons, and had them transported one hundred and fifty miles down

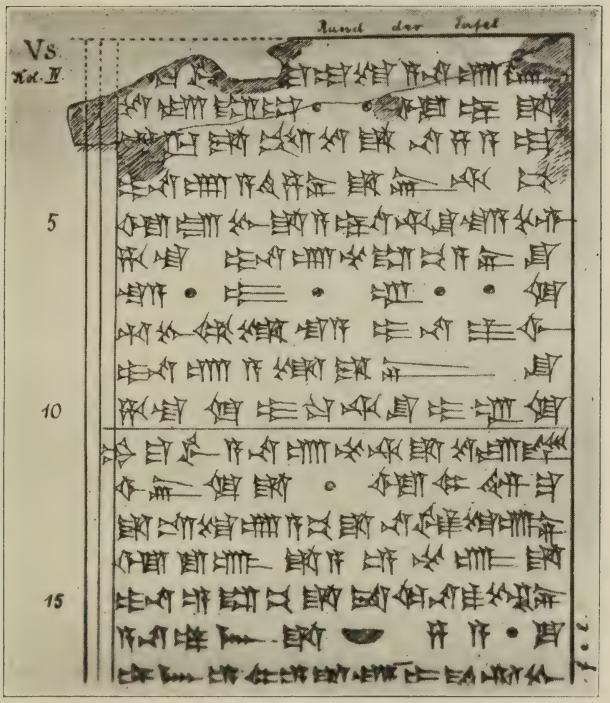


Fig. 31—PORTION OF THE ASSYRIAN LAW CODE

the Nile, unloaded at Thebes and set up in place at Karnak. It took a ship towed by thirty tugs, each with thirty-two oarsmen, 960 oarsmen in all, to do the work of transportation.

Then there are the Memnon Colossi at Thebes, each seventy feet high, and each weighing 700 tons, solid blocks of sandstone, which were transported seventy miles down the river, or one may think of the great statue of Rameses II at the Rameseum which weigh 1,000 tons, or again of the great pyramids and the monster monoliths used in their construction. How were these great stones quarried, and how were they transported? Then there are the palaces carved out of solid rock. What works of engineering and architectural skill!

Some of the tools used by these ancient architects and engineers are most interesting. Some of them used stone saws with almost invisible teeth —fifty to the inch. A bronze saw has been found, nine feet long, with jewelled cutting points, and diamond drills were used which could cut into crystal, quartz, and felspar with perfect ease.

The scientist, too, looks to the ancient Orient for the beginnings of his profession. The Babylonians were the great astronomers of the ancient world. They constructed our calendar and divided our time into months, our days into hours, hours into minutes, and minutes into seconds. When one looks at his watch he is beholding the science of ancient Babylon, the

sexagesimal system is of Sumerian origin. The naming of the planets is Babylonian, and the whole system of modern astronomy goes back in origin to the star-gazers and heaven-worshippers of the Tigris-Euphrates valley.

Egyptians measured time by means of a simple sun-dial consisting of two pieces of crossed board, one piece of which cast a shadow upon the other. They were the great geometricians, one of the most interesting of whose papyri is one containing the famous *pons asinorum,* worked out much as a modern schoolboy would work it out. But the Babylonians excelled in work on fractions, although Egyptian mathematicians were not far behind.

The art of medicine was highly developed in both countries. Campbell Thompson has recently published a great Assyrian Herbal in which he shows how proficient the Assyrian doctor was in his knowledge of herbs and how wonderfully he made use of that knowledge. Babylonian, Assyrian, and Egyptian physicians made scientific diagnoses and prescribed with a great deal of knowledge and accompanying success. Assafoetida, for example, was well known to Assyrian physicians and used in a scientific manner.

Sufficient has perhaps already been said to show how much there is in antiquity to interest the lawyer. Those fascinating legal contracts of Sumeria and Babylonia, drawn up in their precise legal way, signed and sworn to before judges

and witnesses, and in the name of the gods, are full of legal interest. Then there are the great codes of law, such as that of Hammurabi, the Assyrian, and the Hittite codes. The lifting up of the hand in taking an oath, the legal phraseology, the marriage, and commercial contracts all have innumerable points which the lawyer would find of great value in his study of the history of law.

The student of language and literature will find in the reconstruction of ancient Oriental languages and literatures endless material of interest. The history of our own alphabet takes us back through Rome, Greece, and Phoenicia to ancient Egypt. When we look at those signs which we call A, B, etc., we are looking upon the work of ancient Egyptian students of language. As for literature, the contacts are endless. Whether it be prose or poetry, legend or myth, history or biography, essay or prophecy, ethics or philosophy, drama or epic, our research into their origin and development will lead us back to the Tale of Sinuhe or Poem of Pentaur, the Legend of Etana or the Myth of the Descent of Ishtar to Hades, the History of Esarhaddon or the Biography of Uni, the Proverbs of Amen-em-ope or the Prophecy of Ipuwer, the Precepts of Ptah-hotep or the Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage, the Epic of Gilgamesh or the Babylonian Job. What romance and poetry, what tragedy and comedy to be found in these ancient writings. Space does not permit a detailed account of the nature and

extent of ancient Oriental languages and literatures. The field is a fascinating one, and one which fairly bristles with unsolved problems and unanswered questions. There is room for untold adventure into unknown continents of fascinating discovery.

And as far as the student of religion is concerned, Sumeria, Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, and the lands of the Hittites are his happy hunting grounds. Christianity is largely, in origin and development, an Oriental religion. There is not a doctrine nor a point of ritual which may not find its counterpart in ancient Oriental religions. Our idea of God and of man, our systems of worship, our churches and chapels, our ministry and priesthoods, our sacred music and our ritual acts are all Oriental in type. In short, not only are our theology, morals, and rites Oriental in origin and character, but the very head and centre of Christianity, the world's greatest prophet, man's Redeemer, man's Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ Himself, was born of Mary the Virgin, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and fostered by Joseph in Bethlehem of Judea, in Galilee of the Nations, in Oriental Palestine, the Holy Land of the three greatest religions—all three Oriental—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The world's greatest jewel, greatest miracle is God's handiwork, human personality. The student of human nature, of human character, the psychologist, the humanitarian, the philosopher can

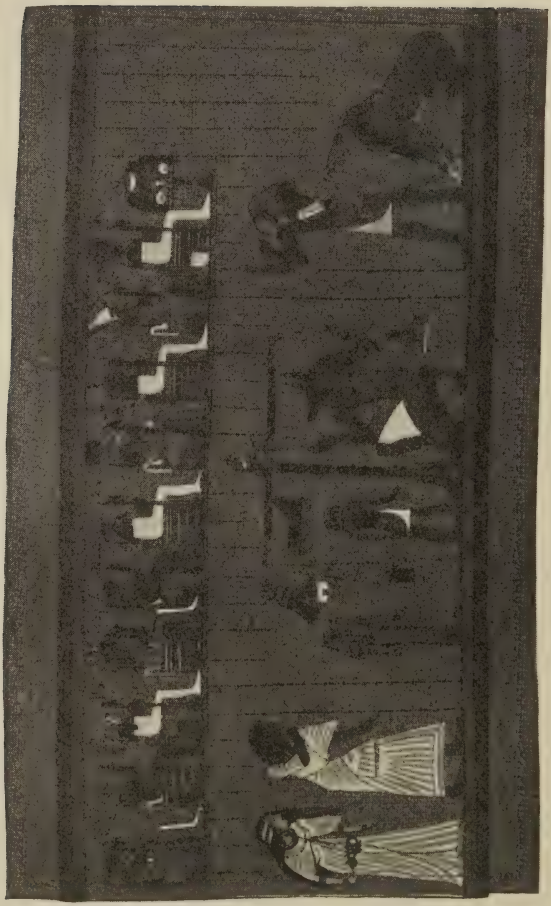


Fig. 32—EGYPTIAN JUDGMENT DAY

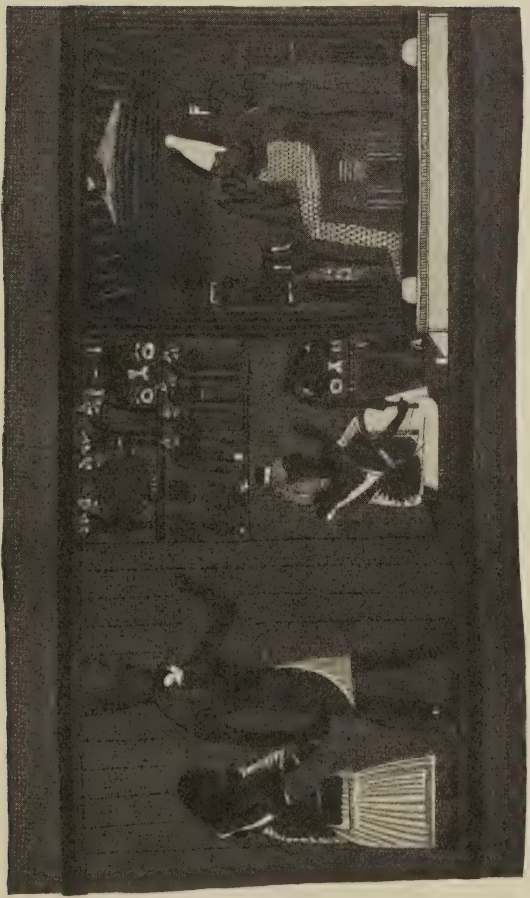


Fig. 33—EGYPTIAN JUDGMENT DAY

find material in the ancient Orient to his heart's content. When shall we ever be able successfully to analyze the personalities of Ptah-hotep, the great Egyptian sage of the Middle Kingdom, of Hammurabi, the great law-giver of Babylon, of Thutmose III, the Napoleon of Egypt, of Hatshepsut, the first great woman, of Semiramis, the queenly Oriental, of Ikhnaton, the great reformer, of thousands of other personalities which crowd the stage of Oriental history?

These are some of the reasons why we are interested in the recovery of forgotten empires. They are not the only ones. But perhaps they are sufficient to show something of the adventure, of the fascination and romance there is in the work of exploring, excavating, deciphering, reconstructing, and coördinating the life and thought, the culture and civilization of the ancient Orient.

VII. BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY

In this brief bibliography emphasis has been placed upon brevity and accessibility. It is for the latter reason that only books in English have been included. Two classes of readers have been kept in mind: First of all, the general reader who may want to read further into the fascinating work of the recovery of forgotten empires, and, secondly, those readers who may become ambitious enough to desire to make a start with some one or other of the ancient Oriental languages. It is for this second class that the names of a few linguistic books have been added.

Chapter I. Introduction.

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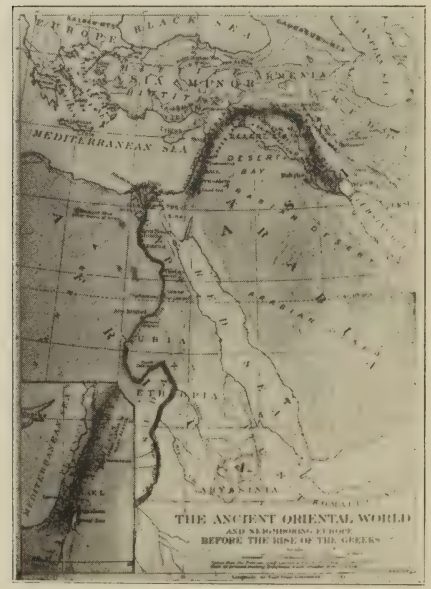

Fig. 34

VIII. LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

1. *Austen Henry Layard* was born in Paris, March 8, 1817. He died in London, July 5, 1894. He was a great explorer and excavator in the field of Assyriology. *Ernest de Sarzec* was born in 1836 and died in June, 1901, in Poiters, France. He excavated Lagash (Tello). *Georg Friedrich Grotefend* was born near Cassel, Germany, June 9, 1775, and died at Hannover, December 15, 1853. His labours on the decipherment of the Cuneiform is found in his work, "Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der persepolitanischen Keilschrift" (1837). *Henry C. Rawlinson* was born in Chadlington, England, April 11, 1810, and died in London, March 5, 1895. He excavated, copied, and deciphered Cuneiform texts. He has been called the British father of Assyriology. *Edward Hincks* was born in Cork, Ireland, in 1792, and died at Killyleagh, December 3, 1866. He contributed effectively to the decipherment of the Cuneiform inscriptions. *Jules Oppert* was born in Hamburg, July 9, 1825, and died in Paris, August 31, 1905. He was a successful excavator, and found many inscriptions at Birs Nimrud near Babylon. *George Smith* was born in England, March 26, 1840, and died at Aleppo, August 19, 1876. In 1872 he discovered the Babylonian account of the flood. He excavated Nineveh. *John Henry Haynes* was born June 27, 1849, and died in North Adams, Mass., June 29, 1910. He was in charge of the American expedition at Nippur in 1893-1896, when 21,000 Cuneiform tablets were discovered.

2. *Jean Francois Champollion* was born at Figeac, France, December 23, 1790, and died in Paris March 4, 1832. In 1824 Champollion published the results of his labours which show him to have been the discoverer of the key to the Egyptian Hieroglyphs. *Gaston Camille Maspero* was born in Paris, June 24, 1846, and died in Paris, June, 1916. He succeeded Mariette as director of the Museum in Cairo. His most interesting work was the publication and translation of the Pyramid Texts. *Hugo Winckler* was born on July 4, 1863, at Graefenhainichen, Germany, and died in Berlin, April 10, 1913. In 1906 he discovered a great number of Hittite inscriptions written in Cuneiform. *Archibald Henry Sayce* was born at Shirehampton, England, September 25, 1846. He has contributed much not only to Assyriology and Egyptology, but also towards the decipherment of the Hittite Hieroglyphs.

3. This illustration shows that the later cuneiform developed out of an early pictographic script.

4. This is an excerpt from the Behistun trilingual inscription which proved to be the key to the decipherment of the cuneiform.

5. This picture shows the three classes of cuneiform characters found on the Behistun inscription. The top and bottom section are Old Persian; the second is Babylonian-Assyrian; and the third is Elamitic.

6. These two cartouches became, in the hands of Champollion, the key to the Egyptian hieroglyphs.

7. The above cartouches were found on the Rosetta Stone. The stone is a piece of black basalt inscribed in hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek characters.

8. This is an inscription in Hittite hieroglyphs. This script has not yet been satisfactorily deciphered. Note that the top line reads from right to left; the second line from left to right; and the third line from right to left again.

9. Gudea reigned in Lagash (Tello), Babylonia, about

2450 B.C. He was one of the greatest builders in the ancient world.

10. Sennacherib attacked Jerusalem in 701, but was obliged to return to Assyria before reducing the city.

11. Ashurbanipal was king of Assyria, 668-626 B.C. It is the great library of Ashurbanipal's palace, portions of which were discovered at Kuyunjik, which is the source of a large part of our knowledge of ancient Assyria and Babylonia.

12. This is a picture of the restoration of the great temple of Anu, the sky-god, in Ashur, the capital of Assyria. Note the two great stage towers, some of which had seven stages.

13. Nebuchadnezzar was the greatest of the kings of the Neo-Babylonian empire. He destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

14. This is an idealized reconstruction of the great city of Babylon. Note the great seven-staged temple.

15. Rameses II, 1292-1225, was most likely the "Pharaoh of the Oppression."

16. Ikhnaton reigned in Egypt from 1375 to 1368 B.C. He is known as the "heretic pharaoh," because he introduced a form of sun-worship distasteful to the worshippers of Amon of Thebes. He has been called the "first monotheist," but the title is rather fanciful.

17. Tutankhamen is now well known. He married one of Ikhnaton's daughters. This fine portrait statue is in the Cairo Museum.

18. These are fragments of the Babylonian accounts of Creation and the Flood. They are in the British Museum.

19. This is a Mohammedan tower at Samarra on the Tigris, and illustrates the ancient "Tower of Babel" structures.

20. Here we see the mummy of Rameses II. It is now in the Cairo Museum.

21. The son and successor of Rameses II was Merneptah. In a hymn of victory inscribed on this stela the name of "Israel" occurs.

22. This is the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, 860-825 B.C. It is now in the British Museum. The second relief from the top, at the right, represents the Assyrian king receiving the submission of Jehu.

23. The Moabite Stone commemorates the success of Mesha, king of Moab, against Israel. It was discovered in 1868, and is now in the Louvre.

24. The top tablet is a Tell el-Amarna letter. These letters, discovered in Egypt in 1888, are a portion of the correspondence which passed between the Egyptian kings and certain Asiatic princes and kings during the fourteenth century B.C. Many of them deal with Palestine. The round tablet contains a list of fields with measurements and statistics. The third tablet is a deed recording the sale of land.

25. This picture shows the magnitude of some of the pillars in the temple of Amon at Karnak. Note the man standing beside one of the columns.

26. This gives a glimpse of the nave of the great temple at Karnak. Note the obelisk.

27. One of the finest works of art in the world was dedicated by Entemena (about 2900 B.C.), king of Lagash, to his god, Ningirsu.

28. These cherubim, winged and human-headed lions, guarded the doors of palaces and temples in Assyria.

29. Among the exquisite works of art found in the tomb chambers of Tutankhamen, none is finer than this beautiful miniature, which forms one end of one of Tutankhamen's boxes.

30. The Code of Hammurabi, discovered in 1901, and now in the Louvre, was compiled about 2000 B.C. The picture shows the first eight columns of this remarkable inscription.

31. Only a few years ago it was discovered that the Assyrians also had their great law codes. The picture shows a portion of such a code of laws.

32-33. In Egyptian theology, ideas about the future world were highly developed. This picture represents the judgment after death. It is taken from an illuminated papyrus, now in the British Museum.

34. This map gives one an idea of what is sometimes called the Biblical World. It shows Palestine and Syria, the high road of the great empires, Egypt, Babylonia, and the Lands of the Hittites.

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